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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN THAILAND :

A MEETING OF PARADIGMS

By



MICHAEL MILES

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH
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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled "Community Development in Thailand: a Meeting of Paradigms" submitted by Michael Miles in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Arts in Community Development

To Si and Peter and understanding

ABSTRACT

Focusing on an examination of the fit between community development principles and the realities of the Thai social order, this thesis analyses the potential for the use of the community development approach within the Thai context.

The study reviews the literature of community development and proposes five principles or assumptions which it holds as key to this process of working with people. These five principles focus on the development of increased social competence among participants as the end-goal of any community development process.

Aspects of Thai village organization are analysed in order to outline those principles of operation central to the village social structure and the key social value orientations which operate through the institutions comprising that structure.

The study concludes with an analysis of the relationship between the principles of community development described in the literature and the values and social structures found within the Thai village setting and offers the opinion that the implementation of community development within the Thai social context is problematic. Conclusions and recommendations relative to the Thai community development program are offered.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

For the past seventeen years the Thai Government has sponsored and involved itself directly in the implementation of a massive community development approach to rural modernization throughout Thailand. This development effort has included the commitment of large amounts of government funding, the deployment of hundreds of village level community workers, the construction and staffing of nine regional community development training and technical services support centers, and the employment of scores of foreign advisors expert in the field.

The results in terms of long term development at the village level have not matched the expected returns. In Norman Jacobs' words: "The C.D. program has not been particularly successful" (Jacobs, 1971: 103). Villager lack of enthusiasm for the approach has been endemic. In general, rural resistance to the implementation of the program along with apparent bureaucratic indifference to the direct participation of villagers in need identification and program decision-making relating to the development efforts has limited the impact of this rural development strategy in the Thai setting.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problem to be examined in this thesis revolves around the difficulty encountered within the Thai setting in bringing some of

the principles of community development into action for the benefit of the village population. Succinctly stated in question form the problem is this: "Why is the community development approach experiencing limited success in Thailand, a country whose rural areas and people appear to be prime candidates for development efforts on the basis of need?" The research efforts represented by this thesis will suggest a tentative rationale for this initial lack of success.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROBLEM

The difficulties encountered in implementing community development within the Thai context bear significance in two areas. The first of these relates directly to the Thai situation whereas the second revolves around the broader issue of the importance of cultural fit between an innovation and the milieu into which it is being introduced.

In the first case, the Thai Government is expending a great deal of effort, manpower, and resources around a program which, for reasons to be further explored below, is not resulting in the proliferation of effective, self-sufficient community development groups within the rural areas. Nor is it resulting in sufficiently meaningful physical and infrastructural development to increase the confidence of the rural population in the effectiveness and responsiveness of the present ruling class in meeting villager needs. This lack of confidence is crucial at the present time due to the increasing levels of communist insurgency in the border

areas of the country. Thaxton (1971:258) maintains that the community development program, from its inception, was designed to foster increased security and to facilitate the counter-insurgency operations of the Central Government. The latest political developments on Thailand's borders, matched by a growing insurgency movement within the Thai state itself, have, if anything, further motivated the Thai Government in their efforts to bolster their popular support at the village level. The apparent ineffectiveness of the community development approach in helping to satisfy village development needs represents a significant problem for the Thai Government, then, since ineffective programs tend to generate hostility rather than support. The present political context lends an importance and urgency to the situation which many of the Thai ruling class are presently beginning to appreciate.

On a broader scale, this problem highlights the importance of understanding the cultural, social, and psychological milieu of a society before proceeding to introduce innovations into that situation. The problems encountered as community development, a basically North American/European problem-solving mechanism based upon democratic, Judeo-Christian tradition is introduced into Thailand, a basically patrimonial, Buddhist culture exemplify the potential hazards of such an exercise. The lack of fit between the principles of community development and the assumptions of Thai tradition will be examined in detail below. The problem of melding the two into a workable approach to village development is significant in that it provides an excellent

example of the complexity of working cross-culturally in the broad field of development.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study is based upon three research questions which attempt to focus upon the interrelationship between the principles of community development, the cultural heritage of the people of Thailand, and the fit or lack of fit between these first two factors. The following examination focusing on the above three areas will suggest some tentative interpretations of the relationship between those factors which influence the state of the art of community development in present day Thailand.

The first question focuses on an exploration of the literature available on community development principles and practices. This literature review is geared to the production of a list of principles or assumptions which may be considered central to community development philosophy. This same list of principles may also serve, in the main, to distinguish community development practice from other forms of rural development activity. In question form the initial focus of this study might be phrased as follows: "What are those principles embodied in the literature of community development which are central to its practice and which differentiate it from other rural development strategies?"

This first research focus concentrates on a general review of community development theory and does not attempt, except in passing, to relate such theory to the Thai social or cultural setting.

The focus of the second research question is directed toward Thai culture and the structure of Thai rural social organization. Through an exploration of this second area of study, the writer will attempt to delineate aspects of the Thai culture and tradition which are central to the Thai village decision-making process and which result in the structuring of a variety of forms of social organization within the village which reinforce this decision-making process in turn. These village social structures will be outlined as well with a view to understanding how Thai culture and tradition is acted out within a social and institutional framework. This second research focus stated as a question reads as follows: "What are the basic values which motivate Thai village decision-making and what are the basic social structures within the village through which these values are acted out?" Since the focus of this study as a whole is on the implementation of the community development program in Thailand, emphasis will be placed upon examination of those values and social structures which bear most directly upon the implementation of development activities within the village setting.

The final research question focuses on the relationship between those principles central to community development as examined by

the first research question and those values or assumptions central to Thai village life as outlined by the second research question. It is the viability of this interrelationship which determines in both the long and short term the feasibility of successfully introducing community development practice into the Thai village situation. This final research focus may be phrased as follows: "What are the limiting and motivating factors operating within the Thai village which bear upon government attempts to introduce community development practice within a rural Thai village setting?" The balance between these limiting and motivating factors represents a prognosis for the success or failure of community development as an approach in dealing with Thai village development needs.

METHODOLOGY

This study utilizes a combination of two approaches for the purpose of examination of the subject at hand. The first of these is represented by an extensive review of literature in both the fields of community development and Thai ethnology. The second is based on the participant-observer role played by the author as a community development worker in Thailand and the observations generated by this experience.

Review of the Literature

Due to the nature of the study, the review of the literature is focused both on theories of community development and on Thai ethnographic materials. In the area of community development, materials reviewed included general writings in community development theory, available Journals of Community Development, and materials published by the United Nations describing both theory and practice of community development as implemented in third world situations. In addition, printed material and correspondence from the Thai Department of Community Development, the United States Agency for International Development (U.S. AID), and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO Thailand) were reviewed with a view to exploring the principles which agencies directly involved in community development in Thailand held as central to their development programs. These last two western agencies have been extensively involved in attempts to implement community development philosophy within the Thai context. Material from these sources proved most useful in pointing the author toward key conflicts between community development principles and Thai cultural assumptions.

The majority of research engaged in in relation to the Thai cultural and social system has been carried out through the auspices of the Thailand Information Center, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok. This center, established in the mid-sixties to facilitate studies of

Thai culture, represents the most extensive collection of material on Thai ethnography in this author's experience. In addition to this initial source of review material, research monographs from the Cornell University Thailand Program, Northern Illinois University Center for Southeast Asian Studies, and the Ohio University Southeast Asia Program have been solicited and reviewed as such studies were found to focus on Thai ethnology and development processes.

Author's Experience in Thailand

Through the auspices of the Thailand Canadian University Services Overseas (CUSO) program, the author was twice afforded the opportunity to work in the field of community development in Thailand. The first assignment was to work at the Bangkok YMCA as a supervisor of the Y's community development program which served five urban slum areas in Bangkok. This assignment was for a period of three years (1969-1972). The second assignment (1974-1976) involved acting as an advisor to the Head of the Training Division of the National Youth Office of the Thai Government. The author's duties through this assignment included training and supervising rural youth leaders as they learned community development methodology for application in their home villages.

Both of these experiences afforded the author an opportunity, as a participant observer, to observe and experience directly the operation of Thai culture and social structure in both rural and urban sett-

ings. In addition, since both assignments dealt directly with attempts to establish viable community development programs, the author was also in a position to observe and note the different forms of resistance of village participants to this form of development activity. These experiences and notes, gathered by the author in his participant-observer role, represent the second source of information drawn upon for analysis in this study.

In including references to his participant-observer experiences within the Thai setting, the author wishes to acknowledge the difficulties in controlling such factors as selective observation, ethnocentric bias, and faulty memory which might tend to render such observations less than wholly accurate. For this reason the author's observations and experiences are included only as they are confirmed by other researchers' work. They are included as a means of clarifying insight or adding detail to existing research rather than as a source of as yet unobserved phenomena. Through the additional clarification made possible by the inclusion of such observations, it is the intention of the author to be able to provide a more exact analysis of the relationship between Thai cultural patterns and community development practice.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Community Development

Although a variety of definitions of the term "community development" are offered in Appendix I, there exists within the field a lack of consensus as to what processes or goals form the basis of the community development approach. A large number of authors concede, however, that there are two foci of the approach which are central to the final definition of the term. The first of these centers upon the approach's concern for an increasing competence among the participants so that they may assume control of development efforts relating to their needs, both in the planning and carrying out of such efforts. The second relates to the successful meeting of participant needs in both physical and structural terms with a view to improving their actual living conditions. Both of the above conditions assume cooperative effort of the participants focused upon meeting community needs as a means of satisfying individual needs.

With the above in mind and, for the purposes of this study, the term "community development" will be defined as that process designed to motivate a change

from a condition where one or two people make decisions for the rest of the people to a condition where people themselves make decisions about matters of common concern; from a state of minimum to one of maximum participation; from a condition where few participate to one where many participate [and] from where all resources and specialists come from outside to one where local people make the most of their own local resources

to successfully meet the needs which they have identified for themselves (Warren, 1972:324-325).

The focus in this definition is on the development of social competence among the participants so that they may be more capable of successfully meeting their joint needs through cooperative undertakings. The main aim of the process is the strengthening of "the horizontal pattern of the local community" (Warren, 1972:325) while at the same time attempting the completion of development projects to improve living conditions in the community. Stated in reverse, development activities which have as their prime focus the accomplishment of some material development task to the exclusion of increased social competence of the participants are not viewed as community development by the terms of reference of this study. Such development activities are better viewed as agricultural development, rural extension, community organization, or rural education depending on their particular focus.

Rural Village Setting

Throughout this study the author refers to the "rural areas" of Thailand. Although there are only a few major urban areas in the whole country, the term "rural" tends to vary from usage to usage in other studies, necessitating a brief clarification as it relates to this thesis.

Within the Thai setting, the largest and most developed areas

throughout the country are those towns which have been designated as provincial capitals. As a result of being designated as provincial capital, towns come under increasing pressure to modernize. Such designation heralds the arrival of larger business interests, an influx of government service workers at higher levels including the provincial governor, and, to some extent, western influence through attendant technology which tends to accompany the above interests. Such diversifications tend to have a cultural impact which, in turn, tends to change the nature of such centers toward a more modernized and urbanized way of life. Most of the remaining centers of population, on the other hand, do not come under such direct pressure and tend to retain to a larger and more observable extent both the traditions and form of the traditional Thai agrarian village.

For the purposes of this study, then, and in keeping with the above described modernization process which occurs most clearly in provincial capitals, the term "rural village" will be considered to refer to all population centers other than provincial capitals. By this definition there are seventy two centers which may be considered other than rural. The remaining population centers are considered rural for this study.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Any study involving the investigation and reporting of cross-cultural data must begin with a clear statement of the limitations involved. Such limitations tend to flow from potential cultural bias of the investigator, language difficulties, lack of opportunity to substantiate information in more than a representative sample of situations within the host culture, and finally the inability, at times, to appreciate the full import of cultural nuances which may be quite clear to the native observer but which escapes the limited perspective of foreigners.

For the purposes of this study, the author wishes to note the following factors which may tend to limit the completeness or accuracy of the final analysis. It is not the author's intention to minimize the importance of these factors but simply to note their existence.

a) Most of the material reviewed by this author in relation to Thai culture and social organization was written in English. The author has a rather minimal ability to read written Thai. As a result, he limited his review to research carried out by other non-Thais whose manuscripts were printed in English and to research carried out by Thai researchers whose ability in English was sufficient for them to produce their final reports in that language. Although the writer spent time discussing research and observations with other Thai researchers

in informal interview situations, the dearth of reference to research carried out by native Thai who had not been potentially affected by spending extended periods of time overseas is, in the writer's opinion, a distinct limitation. Such "native" viewpoints tended, when they were expressed, to point up some of the more basic value patterns in ways in which the more westernized Thai (i.e. those who had been educated abroad and thus more prone to publish in English) tended to obscure.

b) The writer's experiences in Thailand have been limited in scope to those villages in which development activities had already been ongoing for some time. Through his work with the National Youth Office the writer had ample opportunity to visit villages in three of the four regions of the country. The very fact that all of these villages had had a rural youth leader trained to carry out development activities and, in most cases, active for periods of time up to three years, however, may have affected the dynamics which this author observed in such situations. In addition to the NYO workers, many of the villages with which the author came into contact had been assigned a community development village worker as well. It may be that villages which have not had this amount of contact with development workers (and through them the concept of community development) may react in ways different from those observed by this writer.

c) Kaplan (1961) maintains that each of us carries cultural assumptions and biases with us as we enter a culture different from our

own. These biases tend to influence both how a researcher looks at the new culture and what he allows himself to see within that culture. Cultural ethnocentrism tends to act as a lens through which customs and traditions are viewed, labeled, and judged in relation to our own culture. In all cross-cultural studies the danger of such ethnocentric judgement and the possibility of both conscious and unconscious selective observation based upon the cultural biases of the researcher is a danger. Although this author is not aware of instances where such factors influenced this study, he feels it necessary to point out the possibility that the potential for such action on his part in the gathering of data remains a potential limiting factor to the accuracy of his analysis.

d) Throughout the study the author makes reference to "Thai culture" and the "Thai village setting". This poses some difficulty since, as the writer notes below, there are four distinct regions in Thailand, each possessing some marked cultural variations. In the North, for example, there is much more of a tradition of cooperative activity on a village-wide level than in the other three regions, a fact which potentially could have some effect on the possibility of using a community development approach in this area. The problem of regional variation occurs in any study which attempts to generalize from repeated patterns of behavior and social organization observed in a limited number of settings to a wider societal context. The author accepts this limitation and notes simply that he has attempted to

structure his study around observations and statements from the literature which indicate a high degree of similarity between all four regions. Within the scope of this study the author judges it impractical to attempt to explore the full implications of the subcultures which exist within the larger framework.

e) Thai villagers are notably reticent to exchange information with a stranger, especially when that information may tend to deal with another's inadequacies. In this author's experience, discussing the manner in which some of the development workers treated the villagers or conducted community development activities was difficult due to a lack of initial rapport with the respondents. As a result, the information which this author was able to gather through informal discussion with rural youth leaders, community development personnel, and villagers at large may be less than complete. In some cases it may even be inaccurate given the tendency of the Thai in face-to-face interaction to respond to questions by giving the answer which they feel will please the interviewer. As pointed out above, information gathered by the author was used only in conjunction with validating confirmation from the research of other investigators. The reticence of Thai villagers to communicate openly with researchers not familiar to them must, however, be considered a potential limiting factor bearing on the information gathered for this study.

CHAPTER II

PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Community development in itself has little that is really new. It is its recognition as a set of principles and processes which, on application to a community, have a certain specific result in its development which is new (du Sautoy and Waller, 1961:37).

INTRODUCTION

Community development has been described as a process "the primary purpose of which is human development" (Warren, 1974:3). How one goes about such human development is the practice of community development. Why one undertakes the process in a certain manner represents the theory and principles of community development. The question of what exactly differentiates community development from such closely related fields as agricultural extension, rural economy, or community organization relates clearly to an understanding of the goals, methods, and principles of each approach to development. The effective practitioner of community development must face and resolve this question in order to delimit the scope of his role in the community and thereby increase his effectiveness. The community development worker must utilize the set of principles alluded to by du Sautoy and Waller above and function within the processes which result from the application of those principles. Such principles, once adopted by the practitioner, act as a set of

guidelines or assumptions through which the community developer interprets reality within the community and his or her role in the local development process given that reality. J.W. Eaton maintains that such assumptions

include statements about what is i.e. theories and descriptions of actual or plausible relationships between two or more variables. They also include normative convictions about what should be, i.e. statements expressive of deeply held convictions (Eaton, 1963:39).

In order for the practitioner to undertake community development in a consistent and effective manner, it is essential that he have a clear grasp of the principles and related assumptions upon which he bases his role and which form his concept of the development process.

The present chapter will explore those principles and processes which literature in the area of community development indicates are fundamental to the concept of community development. That there are at times conflicting viewpoints as to the nature of community development is acknowledged as a given. That there are at the same time sufficient agreeing viewpoints concerning the principles and processes involved to enable the author to arrive at a clear statement of the nature of community development as a concept is hereby proposed. The following review of relevant literature points up these commonalities and will clarify the base of principles from which the author personally and a large body of community development writers in general approach community development.

THE PROCESS-METHOD CONTROVERSY

Throughout the definitions listed in Appendix I reference is made to the terms "process" and "method". An understanding of the significance of these two terms is essential to a grasp of the concept of community development since, as one moves from the view of community development as a process to its conceptualization as a method, so do one's assumptions regarding the goals and role of the worker change.

I.T. Sanders was the originator of the framework which attempts to classify the "four current ways of viewing community development, i.e. as a process, as a method, as a program, and as a movement" (Sanders, 1958:1). Zahir Ahmed comments on this framework as follows:

It must be admitted that some confusion has arisen from the fact that community development is sometimes referred to as a process, sometimes as a method, sometimes as a program, and sometimes as a movement. When we use the word process we think of a procession of changes where the people themselves make decisions about matters of common concern: from some cooperation to a larger amount of co-operation. Emphasis is on what happens to the people socially and psychologically. When community development is referred to as a method, we think of a way of working. The emphasis is on the goal or objective... When we use the word program, we think of objectives, activities, procedures, and their targets. On the other hand, when we speak of community development as a movement it becomes something more than a formal program. It becomes a cause to which people feel themselves committed or dedicated (du Sautoy and Waller, 1961:36).

Although there are four ways of viewing community development

the contrast between the first two (i.e. process and method) appears more generic than the contrast between the remaining two classifications. The difference between process and method appears to this author to be more basic, dealing with ultimate goals and assumptions as to appropriate methods of reaching those goals. This contrasts with the differences between the programme and movement conceptualizations which center more on organizational and ideological factors respectively. In fact, it is possible to view community-development-as-movement as having the same goals as community-development-as-process, i.e. social and psychological development. Peter du Sautoy, speaking of community development in Ghana, defines it in exactly these terms, calling it a "philosophy as well as a process" (Cary, 1970:25), thereby emphasizing its idealistic as well as its practical aspects. The programme as well as movement aspects could be used equally well to emphasize the material aspects of the development goals, thereby coinciding with the concept of community-development-as-method. Since, in this author's opinion, the difference between process and method forms the more generic and, in relation to this particular thesis, the more relevant contrast, this chapter will deal almost exclusively with the process/method dichotomy and its ramifications.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AS PROCESS

Organizational Process

When considering community development with an emphasis on the

process aspect of the concept, there are two different approaches to the process which may be assumed. The first is the view emphasizing the organizational aspects of the practice. The community developer's role, seen from this viewpoint, is to uncover existing cooperative organizational structures within the community and to assist in the further development of these structures so that the people can better "organize and define ... needs and problems ... make group and individual plans ... and supplement [their own] resources when necessary" (Shields, 1967:56). In many cases, especially in some third world countries where cooperative effort is viewed with misgiving, the process of organization is prolonged and complicated. George Foster comments:

...in a society ruled by the implicit model of a static economy, voluntary cooperation can be expected to function as an effective mechanism for promoting social and economic change only under exceptional circumstances; under normal conditions the personal risks are too great to make the activity attractive (Foster, 1960-61:175).

There are a variety of other reasons which tend to work against voluntary cooperation including religious beliefs, past bad experiences, and family tradition. Nonetheless, the process of organization of structures and groups for such efforts represents a most important factor in the implementation of any community development program.

The above-described process of the development of cooperative community structures is closely tied to the view of community development as "basically democratic in its philosophy" (Dunham, 1970:173). The organizational process is necessary to facilitate individual

citizen input to community decisions since structures present in the community are often inadequate for this process. The concept of widespread citizen participation in community decision-making and action programs necessitates in many cases the prior organization of a variety of forms and structures to make such participation feasible. Such basic organizational work can be viewed as a process since it takes as its starting point the present level of organization of the people and builds upon existing structures as the individuals and groups in the village become more and more involved in community development projects. Given this approach to development, the individual action projects undertaken in the village do not lose their importance. Their new role is based, however, not in their completion so much as in the organizational processes they necessitate to ensure successful implementation. Focus is on the development and cultivation of attitudes of cooperation and commitment to the community which, as Foster points out above, is not naturally present in many societies. The speed of the process which works to develop such attitudes is determined by the rate at which people themselves choose to become more involved. This contrasts clearly with the approach of the community worker who appears on the scene with a ready-made plan (and the required organizational structure) and who proceeds to force both his plan and structure on a non-comprehending community. This second approach represents the community-development-as-method conceptualization. In this approach, the community worker has already formed his plan. He realizes, however, that he will have to develop

some local structures to facilitate his plan for the community. Given this reality, he chooses structures which he feels appropriate for the situation and attempts to develop these in the community. The emphasis within this approach is not in helping the people go through a process of organizational evolution but rather on the implementation of an immediate structure to realize specific goals.

Educational Process

The second and perhaps more widely adopted view of community development as process seeks to emphasize the educational aspects of the process i.e. what happens to the people socially and psychologically as a result of community development efforts. J.J. Shields comments:

In a joint article, two U.S. community development staff officers write that "...a good community development program seeks to achieve its goals through an educational process in which the attitudes, the concepts, and the goals of the village people are changed." A good program, they feel, changes people from passive, non-participating members of the community to citizens capable of democratic participation in community problem solving (Shields, 1967: 57).

The learning process attendant to this approach tends to encompass the learning of new organizational patterns and behavior since, in order to undertake community problem solving and planning, new organizational structures often have to be evolved by the participants. The learning process, however, encompasses more than simply learning how to structure input in new ways. It concerns itself with the more basic learnings of

the values of cooperative effort; since organizational structures are not required if the need for cooperative community effort is not felt and in some way legitimized. As Foster pointed out, there are still many individuals in various cultures who do not appreciate the value of cooperative effort in an approach to community problem solving.

Community development has been defined by the United Nations as a problem solving process whereby the "efforts of the people themselves" are united with other government and private resources to bring about social and economic development. One of the common difficulties in implementing this initially is the reticence of individuals to invest their personal efforts and resources in "community" projects. Such initial hesitation of potential participants necessitates a period of social action education whereby individuals come to understand and appreciate the cooperative nature of community development efforts as well as the potential benefits which they, as members of the community, stand to gain from a cooperative community development approach. Once interest in the program is aroused, the educational process continues to develop attitudes and values along lines conducive to the active participation of the individual in group activities and cooperative efforts.

The concept of community-based participation is considered crucial to the community development process (Dunham, 1970; United Kingdom Colonial Office, 1958). Yet there are groups of individuals who consider such

involvement beyond their ability or right. For such individuals, the concept of advising "superiors" or "experts" as to their needs or making input to program plans involves stepping out of a social role to which they have been relegated by tradition and, in some cases, by powerful elites with a vested interest in the maintenance of the status quo. The community development educational process attempts to teach these individuals, through experience, that their participation in planning sessions and project implementation is valuable both to their own interests and to the group as a whole. Research has shown that attitude and value change is long-term in nature, involving a progressively larger commitment of the individual to group goals and necessitating continued success in goal achievement over an extended period. Such attitude change, once achieved, represents qualitative changes in the manner in which participants approach community problem solving, i.e.

change from a state where one or two people or a small elite within or without the local community make decisions for the rest of the people to a state where people themselves make these decisions about matters of common concern; change from a state of minimum to a state of maximum participation; change from a state where few participate to a state where many participate (Cary, 1970:19).

Such qualitative changes represent the goal of the community-development-as-process approach.

The process which is involved in this change from minimum to maximum participation leading to active involvement in community development programs represents for many writers and practitioners the crucial difference between community development and other closely related

fields such as agricultural extension and community organization. In the latter two fields, programs are predetermined to a large extent. Technical experts such as agriculturalists or social workers are responsible for program implementation. Their expertise lies within the scope of their field and often does not encompass process-oriented skills. Although program implementation may involve consultation with the people affected, J.W. Eaton points out that, while there may be "all the forms of democratic participation in policy making - such as voting - important decisions are predetermined almost like data programmed for computer analysis" (Eaton, 1963:41). Such an analogy is appropriate since agriculturalists and social workers are indeed technicians in their fields. Participation at the planning level, given the program emphasis of these technically-oriented village workers, is an affront to their expertise. Although they may well appreciate the importance of acceptance of their program by the people for whom it is being developed, the program nevertheless remains their program. The participation aspect of the process becomes a selling game whereby the technicians seek to convince the community of the value of their plan and thereby gain their support. Communication is one way and often is hidden as such.

Such an approach to program implementation closely resembles the community-development-as-method approach. This view usually limits participation at the policy level to structured input to plans drawn up in advance by experts. The meaning of "participation" as viewed by

practitioners of this method is translated into the use of community residents to implement plans drawn up by technical experts from outside the community. This approach often represents itself as espousing the community-development-as-process philosophy and points to the active involvement of participants in making input at the planning level as evidence of their commitment to this approach. The crucial difference, however, is that the input is made to a plan already drawn up. In addition, the decision-making power as to which input is acceptable for incorporation in the plan remains outside the community. A good example of this approach may be found in the City of Edmonton's "housing planning sessions" undertaken in local municipal districts in 1978. Numerous input sessions were undertaken even though the City had already formulated its plan. This approach was used to give the residents a feeling of participation and to afford the planners an opportunity to sell their plans to those who attended the meetings. Such a strategy, though making use of the form of participation requisite for process-oriented community development, fails to accept the basic tenet of this latter approach i.e. that direct participation of citizens in program development may result in more appropriate and frequently more effective programs. The centrality of the concept of direct participant involvement will be further examined in the following section on the basic principles of community development. It is important to note in connection with the present process/method discussion, however, that active and direct participation in decision-making is one of the crucial factors differentiating the two approaches. The facilitation of

such participation is also one of the major emphases of the educational component involved in community development under the process approach.

The differences between the process approach to C.D. and the method approach as discussed above revolve around two main factors. First is the end-goal of the effort. The process goal stresses the gradual development within the participants of "growth in competence" (Biddle and Biddle, 1965:221), specifically in skills required to function as a group, solve problems cooperatively, and carry out action programs based on community identification of needs. The goal of the "method" approach is represented by the implementation of programs designed to achieve specific developmental ends. In this second approach the emphasis is on the concrete project and its completion rather than what happens to the participants as they work on the project.

A second major difference between the two approaches revolves around the source of decision-making regarding the projects to be implemented. The process approach stresses the importance of input from the participants. Such input, process practitioners maintain (Dunham, 1970; United Kingdom Colonial Office, 1958), represents the most legitimate source of felt needs to be considered in the design of projects. The method approach, on the other hand, holds that experts who possess technical knowledge in their respective fields should determine what developmental needs are relevant. Such experts should, they maintain, have the overall final decision-making power in program

design. The programs having been determined, attempts may be made to sell them to the recipients. Such attempts, however, are clearly understood as marketing ploys to develop local support for predetermined programs. J.W. Eaton comments that, as a logical extension of this strategy

the expertist community development adherent believes that, in the absence of community response to the technical program deemed "necessary", it should be imposed in the name of the ideals which the program is designed to serve in the name of the community's "greater good" (Eaton, 1963:42).

BASIC PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

In the paragraphs above describing the process/method dichotomy, several principles of community development have already been touched upon briefly. The following section will examine these and other principles which appear frequently either through direct reference to the principles as such in the literature or by implication in definitions of community development (see Appendix I). Through an examination of these principles the author will make explicit some of the conceptual and behavioral assumptions inherent in both the process and method approaches to community development.

- a) Community development is based upon both the economic and social development needs of the community (Dunham, 1963:141).

Many development programs, as noted above, are concerned with

specific material goals only. They assume that the basic problem which individuals within communities must confront is economic in nature and that, by direct connection, improved social conditions will follow an increased flow of economic benefits. The development approach in Northern Alberta which has centered on oil exploration and development is a classic example of an emphasis on economic development to the exclusion of consideration of social factors and related social development.

Community development, on the other hand, assumes that economic and social development are equally important and that economic advancement without an increased social "competence" does not represent development. Dunham comments:

If the sole or basic goal of a project is a new road, a school building, better houses, the use of fertilizers, or the like, it is a project in community improvement and the project is properly the primary responsibility of the departments concerned... If the ultimate goal is not merely the concrete project, but what happens to the people while working toward their goal and as a result of its achievement, then the project is concerned with community development" (Dunham, 1970:173).

It is this distinction which sets community development apart from other processes and, in the opinion of some, categorizes community development as a radical process. Economic development per se is difficult to view as a threat to the status quo since, as the standard of living goes up, citizens tend to become satisfied and not question government policy or decision-making. Government programs to improve the material welfare of their citizens are usually welcomed by the people as long as

the people are not required to make undue contributions to the process. Conversely, actions by the citizens to influence the social structure - to change the method of decision-making - are seen by vested interests as a threat to the existing power structure. The United Kingdom Colonial Office has pointed out that, in the past, given the material development emphasis of the approach, community development has appealed to many government policy planners. The document continues: "Should community development espouse a more radical approach... its future government support is problematic" (United Kingdom Colonial Office, 1958:4). Community development, with its emphasis on participation of the people in decisions which affect them often strikes at the base of established power relationships (whereas community action projects and community improvement designs do not). Roland Warren has described community development as

an approach which does not assume the status quo. It is not a systems-maintenance approach; it is a systems-disturbing approach. In this sense it is revolutionary. It doesn't assume the current status of power relationships among which people live but sets about deliberately to use a particular kind of process to reorganize those power relationships and decision-making loci" (Dunham, 1972:26).

Given this last statement, it is interesting to note that, although the larger number of definitions of community development cited in Appendix I allude to "social development" in one form or another, only Bregha's definition refers directly to "power relationships". This omission, in the author's opinion, demonstrates a rather classic and widespread naivety on the part of community

development practitioners in relation to the implications of developing the social as well as the material dimensions of community life. (Either that or it demonstrates a sensitivity on the part of community development theorists to the fact that power elites would not be willing to buy into programs which took as their basis the alteration of the power structure upon which their elitist positions were based.)

The development of structures to facilitate citizen participation in the decision-making process and the dual emphasis on the material betterment of the people and on their increased social competence in community decision-making are heavily subscribed to in the community development literature. These would thus seem to represent clear principles of the community development process approach.

- b) Community development should start with felt needs (Dunham, 1963:141).

"Felt needs" is a term which has been traditionally connected with both the process and method approaches to community development. For the process model they represent the basis of the action program around which organization and education occur. In the method model, they tend to be used as the justification for government-sponsored programs in the community. Dunham writes:

So far as possible, a community development program should be based on the "felt needs", desires, and aspirations of the community. [Such needs represent] the unforced consensus of the community, or the participants, rather than the promotion of a predetermined program by a group or organization either inside or outside the community (Dunham, 1970:173).

The identification of felt needs is crucial to any community development effort since they represent the focus of action for the participants.

Of equal importance, however, the process of identifying felt needs represents the first step in developing a sense of community. A large number of definitions of community tend to use geographical locality as a major identifying factor. In an analysis of ninety four definitions of community, however, Hillery found that the greatest area of agreement as to what formed an "effective" (here meaning "capable of mobilizing for common effort") community was around the area of possession of common ends, norms, or means (Hillery, 1957:120). Roberts restates the above in relation to community development:

Looked at from the point of view of a community development worker beginning work in a village or a local leader concerned with the betterment of life in the village, the geographical factors will give no particular clues as to where to start unless they clearly create the problem. The clues lies in the perception of the problems facing the people and the groupings of the people who are conscious of these problems (Roberts, 1979:26).

As people feel the same needs and identify others who are concerned with the same problems, there is a start to the building of a "community of interests". Roberts is quick to point out that the mere possession of common felt needs does not necessarily lead to an effective community. He maintains that "an effective community begins to form only when objectives begin to be formulated around these common problems" (Roberts, 1979:26). However, a common awareness of felt needs is the

first step in the process which, under the guidance of a leader skilled in working with people and capable of motivating cooperative effort, can lead to what Hillery identified as common ends, norms, and means which, as pointed out above, represent the three most commonly identified factors upon which the concept of community is based. Felt needs, then, are one of the bases not only for community development but also for the concept of community itself. They identify for the community a structure around which to work as well as those specific groups of individuals within a community who are concerned about common sets of problems.

Notwithstanding the above, the question arises as to the practicality and validity of using expressed felt needs alone as the basis of development programs. An examination of community development programs around the world indicates that the majority are government sponsored. Government mandates tend to extend beyond needs as expressed by small groups to regional or national frameworks and beyond short-term to long-term developmental concerns. Regardless of whether government agencies propose to use either of the community development frameworks, they must take into account larger constituencies of citizens than may be concerned with specific needs. Warren goes so far as to maintain that any effective change at the community level must be divorced from government control and left in the hands of what he terms "independent citizen power" (Cox, Erlich, Rothman, and Tropman, 1970:8). This is rather an extreme proposal and Warren does indicate that there

is still a rather limited role for government in the area of funding, but it does dramatize the dilemma of government involvement in community development based upon locally identified felt needs. Julia Henderson, speaking of felt needs in relation to the United Nation's concept of community development, comments: "If there is to be any general impact of community development on economic development - for example, if there is to be a real connection with the national plans - then there does have to be an educated and persuaded need" (Henderson, 1969:9). The choice thus balances between relinquishing control to the people and their self-determined felt needs (Warren) and directing the people's identification of felt needs so that the locally identified felt needs will correspond to government identified national needs. It is at the stage of implementation that the principle of felt needs becomes problematic.

With respect to the validity of the felt needs expressed by larger and more divergent community groups, Dunham raises another major difficulty with the principle of development based upon expressed felt needs: "Whose felt needs will be expressed? Those of the people of the community, or those of the leaders, the landowners, the elite, or the ready of tongue?" (Dunham, 1970:188) As the community is identified over time as a "community of interest" as suggested by Hillery, this problem becomes less crucial but it remains to a certain extent nonetheless. As felt needs determine development priorities, the question of whose felt needs - the landowners' or the peasants' - determine program directions becomes crucial. The elite clearly have

a better grasp of the wider framework, but experience indicates that their felt needs seldom represent development for the less powerful. Dunham maintains that the realist chooses a middle path between the two sets of needs from his vantage point which in theory allows him to weigh the needs of the local "community of interest" against those of the state (Dunham, 1970:91). The United Nations, however, referring to its documented experience in community development, points out that

...the conversion of mobilization [around locally expressed needs] into manipulation [of the felt need identification process and subsequent development efforts] is ... self defeating in that manipulated participation is unlikely to correspond sufficiently with the real desires and capabilities of the people to bring about a substantial contribution to the development objectives of the State" (United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America, 1973:78).

The approach which attempts to set a balance between State needs and community interests often does not bring about sufficient alleviation of the needs of the community to make programs meaningful for potential participants. Felt needs, then, as a principle of community development, represent a widely accepted maxim for determining program direction as well as a limiting factor for agencies charged with the satisfaction of needs on a wider level than the community base.

c) Community development should be democratic (Dunham, 1963:141).

Of all the principles referred to in the literature, this one represents most clearly, in this author's opinion, the Western European/

North American value base upon which community development has been built. It embodies the view that each individual has the right to participate in his own development and to make input to development efforts which will affect him. The use of the term "democratic" to describe community development reflects both the goal and the means of implementing the process. J.J. Shields, in writing of the U.S. Agency for International Development program, states the view that: "a successful program ... changes village people from passive, non-participating members of the community to citizens capable of democratic participation in community problem-solving" (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 1971:57). The specific goal of the American aid program was the development of democratic (in this sense meaning direct and personally involving) methods of decision-making at the community level rather than the economic or material goals around which such democratic participation would revolve. The major emphasis within American-sponsored community development programs was on what happened to the people as they participated, what forms of participation were encouraged, how equally was each individual listened to as all made input to the process, and how such participation changed the perceptions of the citizens with regard to their own personal ability to add to and benefit from cooperative decision-making. In this sense, then, U.S. AID envisioned community development as a process which led to the goal of spreading the democratic ideals of mass participation in decision-making and cooperative community effort to communities which did not have this tradition. This,

to some extent, also represents the British approach as stated in the Colonial Office Handbook for Community Development:

Community development is not a method of doing economic development on the cheap and success cannot be measured by adding up the material projects completed. They are but means to a social and political end. The product of successful community development is not wells, roads, schools, and new crops. It is stable, self-reliant communities with an assured sense of social and political responsibility (Davis, 1973:65).

The attainment of the goal of this democratization process is achieved through what Shields refers to as an education process. This involves carrying out projects around specific felt needs as identified by the local people and using procedures following the decisions of the participants to demonstrate the effectiveness of this approach. Commenting on this procedure, Curtis Mial, in defining community development as a democratic social process, notes that the process puts emphasis on the "manner of proceeding". He explains:

This implies that it is possible to follow an orderly progression from exploration and initiation through study and discussion to action and evaluation. It puts the emphasis, too, on the local group, on local initiative, on local participation. Finally, it puts the emphasis on full responsible participation and action by all the people affected (Cary, 1970:21).

Community development, with its emphasis on involving people in the identification of needs and the planning of programs to meet those needs, becomes by definition democratic in that it attempts to elicit the widest possible involvement of people affected by development programs in their community. The "manner of proceeding" simply

becomes a model of the process goal of community development - the active participation at all levels of those potentially affected by the program. The British Colonial Office used this approach in its attempts to develop competence for independence. U.S. AID used this view of community development to promote "the democratic way of life" in countries to which it extended aid. Dunham, in discussing the philosophy of community development, states his view that community development is basically democratic in its theoretical assumptions since

logically it is tied up with such ideas as ultimate control by the people, a substantial degree of freedom of individuals and groups, a considerable amount of government decentralization, and widespread citizen participation (Dunham, 1970:173).

That such theoretical assumptions are not universally accepted and put into practice he does not argue. To the extent, however, that programs deviate from the model of democratic decision-making in planning and implementation by the participants, Dunham would have us classify them as something other than community development.

d) Community development is based on local participation (Dunham, 1963:141).

Closely related to the principle of democratic decision-making outlined above is the principle that all community development must have the direct participation of citizens affected by the program. The Colonial Office maintains that community development is "...an approach that emphasizes popular participation and the direct involvement of a population in the process of development" (United Kingdom

Colonial Office, 1958:9). There remains, however, the crucial question as to the level of "participation" that is practical and/or acceptable by government bodies administering the technical assistance which forms a large part of most development projects. In the eyes of some community development practitioners and writers, the concept of participation is sufficiently vague to allow for an interpretation bordering on what the British have specifically maintained that which community development is not: "...a method of doing economic development on the cheap" (Davis, 1973:65). Participation in such cases means the use of local resources and the labour of participants with a view to keeping the capital costs of development efforts low. In relation to this question, C.T. Davis asks: "Does participation mean that the poor people would work in the program, or does it mean that they would share in the policy-making role?" (Davis, 1973:134) The question is key to the definition of participation, with the role participants play in the development projects reflecting the development philosophy of those who tend to control the projects.

Given the democratic nature of community development as described above and the concept of felt needs which in theory form the basis of action programs in the community, it would appear that the use of a community development strategy would necessitate popular participation at the policy-making level. Given the approach which views community development as process, a share in policy decisions and program definition becomes essential to the educational process leading to competence

in decision-making. Given the model of community development as a method, however, participation assumes no more than the physical involvement of the citizens in carrying out what often amounts to a government program. The rationale for participation here represents a belief that involvement in the program will engender more commitment to its initial completion and continuing maintenance while saving the government labour and material costs. For agencies employing this latter approach, participation of the citizens in need definition and program planning has complex implications since it calls into question the fundamental relationship between the people (as receivers of service) and the government officials (as providers of service). As the participants assume a more active role in the development of plans and the determination of strategies, the government official/citizen relationship becomes more egalitarian, representing the view that all parties have legitimate input to add to the development process. Marris and Rein, writing of the Office of Economic Opportunity experience, comment that "...faith in the power of spontaneous local democracy reflects a peculiarly American tradition" (Littrell, 1976:27). The implication is that the political and cultural realities of the environment in which the community development "participation model" is attempted must be substantially similar to the American tradition. Given that there are cultures which do not share similar traditional value patterns with the Americans, popular participation within some cultural milieus may be viewed as inappropriate unless wide-scale social and cultural changes are instituted through a long term

educational process, a process which would clearly strike at the established power structure.

Given the above-outlined implications, it is questionable whether community development is an appropriate development technique for use in some non-western cultures except where community development is defined as "method". The net effect of popular participation used as a technique in a community-development-as-method approach in cultural settings which have a tradition base different from the North American experience would be the implementation of a variety of government-determined economic projects with the secondary effect of maintaining a continuing dependency of the communities on a paternalistic government and bureaucracy. Such an approach would ignore the possibilities of developing increased competence among the people in community problem-solving, since to undertake such a task would be to undermine the positions of the very people responsible for directing the development program.

The above controversy notwithstanding, the United Nations and, according to Dunham, a large number of community development theorists, maintain that participation at the decision-making level is one of the basic principles of community development. The United Nations states:

Community development aims at increased and better participation of the people in community affairs, re-vitalization of existing forms of local government, and transition toward effective local administration where it is not yet functioning (Dunham, 1963:147).

The translation of this principle into action is often problematic, however, given cultural and traditional backgrounds.

e) Self-help is basic to community development (Dunham, 1963:141).

In Dunham's summary of principles compiled for his survey of definitions of community development, the third most frequently stated principle noted was that of self-help, the process of indigenous efforts related to self-organization and self-motivation in terms of manpower and resources by the people involved in the implementation of a community project. The United Nations definition of community development maintains that the process is composed of two essential elements: 1) participation of the people with as much reliance as possible on their own initiative and resources; and 2) the provision of technical services of the government in ways which "encourage initiative, self-help, and mutual help". (See Appendix I for full definition). David Schler writes:

Community development is based upon the philosophy of self-help and participation by as many members of the community as possible. The tendency to focus on self-initiative and self-responsibility may give rise to creativity directed toward improvement. It becomes the antithesis of a dependent society in which the individual actors wait for some external stimulus to trigger the process of change to which they then respond (Cary, 1970: 138).

In the sense that the self-help principle emphasizes the assumption of responsibility by the people themselves for the development

of their communities, the self-help concept is closely related to the process approach to community development and the democratization goals of that process. The more the citizens assume the functions of decision-making, planning, and the responsible implementation of projects within their communities, the less dependent they become on leadership and other direct input from government leaders and bureaucrats. The participants develop their own competence in dealing with community needs while directing requests for specific expertise and material assistance which is beyond their ability to generate on a self-help basis to government officers responsible for the respective fields of service. The important factor to be noted here is that such requests are based on the initiative of the participants and not some externally determined priority.

Development undertaken following the above-outlined process is in keeping with the basic "human development" goals of the community development approach. Such a process, however, has implications for existing structural arrangements in some cultural settings. The United Nations points out that

... emphasis on the initiative and self-help of local communities assumed that self-help could lead to development without significant structural changes in the rural economy and the established power complex and without substantial external assistance to build an adequate rural infrastructure (United Kingdom Colonial Office, 1958:9).

Such assumptions proved naive in cultures where large landed elites controlled the distribution of wealth and the purchase of agricultural

produce. In other cultures, social traditions are such that dependence on patrons or, in modern terms, "bureaucrats", is an accepted social pattern. The client/patron relationship is such that reciprocal benefits are assumed. The client offers unconditional allegiance to the patron while the patron assures aid in the form of material goods, deferrment of payments in hard times, and other preferential treatment. The power structure of traditional societies has long been based on such relationships and in many modernizing cultures the relationship of client/patron has been transferred to that of the client/bureaucrat. The concept of self-help clashes with this relationship in that it tends to nullify the base of the accepted power relationship: the traditional dependence of the client on the bureaucrat. Given the tendency of social traditions to develop in reaction to and at a slower pace than the physical needs of communities (otherwise defined as culture lag), often the needs of clients in traditional societies force the continued reliance on established structural patterns. In such cases, although the concept of self-help may be appealing in theory to the participants of a development project, necessity often dictates use of more expedient methods. This in effect makes the introduction of the concept of self-help more difficult, since those participants who follow traditional dependency patterns may initially achieve physical goals more promptly (although the achievement of such goals is dependent on the whims of the patron).

A final factor which relates to the utility of the concept of self-help in the community development process is the educational component which must, of necessity, be undertaken in communities where self-help is a new principle. Warren maintains that citizen participation in the United States involves "a substantiation of colorful but vague language about a transfer of power, about organizing the poor, about slum area residents exerting substantial control over the institutions which govern their lives" (Cox, Erlich, Rothman, and Tropman, 1970:4). Such "substantiation" would involve a "massive change in the entire institutional structure" of the communities in which the participants lived. The process of such a large-scale change must involve an equally large-scale educational effort with the purpose of legitimizing new social/institutional relationships and establishing the concept of citizen participation and self-help as legitimate within those new frameworks. Given the tradition of dependence, such an educational effort would have to be undertaken by the elite. Control of the program would thus remain in the hands of the elite (as do the vast majority of community development programs presently in operation today).

That bureaucrats in such a position of control could remain in a position to foster self-help in the community development sense outlined above and still remain in control is logically inconsistent. That the vast majority of bureaucrats would be willing to work toward the destruction of a social order which maintains their natural ascen-

dence is also logically inconsistent. The resultant efforts of the patron class within such social contexts tend to re-define the goals of the educational process such that the concept of self-help is modified. The new definition reflects the community-development-as-method approach. In this new interpretation self-help is translated as participants involving themselves in the physical undertaking of a project and the contribution of funds and materials to the development efforts. Project planning and other decision-making functions are reserved as the role of the bureaucrat. Through such an approach, the costs of project implementation are cut, the participants are "involved" in the project (the assumption being that involvement at this level will somehow assure ongoing commitment to the maintenance of the project upon initial completion), and the client/bureaucrat dependency role relationship is maintained. Such an approach conflicts directly with both the American and British definitions of community development and related goals. This is to be understood, however, given the cultural settings in which these two sets of definitions were developed and the cultural settings into which community development has subsequently been introduced.

The principle of self-help can be viewed as one of the methods by which the educational process associated with community development is undertaken, as well as one of the goals of the same educational process. It is a means through which the development of self-confidence, self-reliance, and competence is brought about according to both the American and British approaches. In some cases, as described above, it

has been used as a method of maintaining dependency relationships. Such use, however, does not correspond to one of the major goals of the community development process - the development of competence for human development in the community setting.

SUMMARY

The principles discussed immediately above are not exhaustive in terms of the broad field of community development. Dunham's study (1963:141-151) lists an additional twelve which community development theorists mention as basic to the C.D. approach. The above-listed principles are important, however, to an understanding of the generic differences between the view of community development as a process and community development as a method. The discussion of these two approaches will have clarified the author's understanding of the community development process. In addition, the intention has been to indicate some of the possible complications involved in implementing the community development program approach given a cultural setting different from that within which the basic principles of community development were developed.

The specific country of study with which this thesis concerns itself is Thailand. It is to an examination of the Thai cultural setting and Thai "principles of behavior" that this study now turns. Such an examination will set the stage for a comparison between the

principles of community development described above and the behavioral assumptions under which the Thai cultural setting operates.

CHAPTER III

THE THAI SOCIAL SETTING

Every human community is organized along some pattern. This overall pattern of village organization may be labelled social organization or social structure. Within this overall structure there are a number of sub-patterns or systems relating to different aspects of community life.... To achieve genuine understanding of village leadership or the political system [or any other aspect of village life for that matter], it is necessary to examine the more salient features of the larger village culture (Yatsushiro, 1966:37).

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the fit or lack of fit between the principles of community development and the principles or assumptions under which Thai society - specifically Thai rural society - operates on a day-to-day basis. Chapter II has outlined some widely accepted principles under which the community development approach operates. This third chapter will describe in some detail some of the more salient features of the Thai village culture. These will include those social systems which are particularly significant at the village level with regard to the implementation of community development as well as those social values which determine the form and function of those systems and which operate through them. The above-mentioned overall social structure (including its subsidiary systems and associated values and beliefs) provide, in each society, the cultural framework within which approaches to innovation and change

such as community development must operate. The following analysis of the Thai setting will clarify some of the unique challenges which the Thai structure presents to the community development approach.

THAILAND - SOME STARTING POINTS

Thailand is a Southeast Asian kingdom bounded on the south by Malaysia and the Gulf of Siam, on the west by Burma, on the northeast by Laos, and on the east by Cambodia. The population, according to a 1975 estimate (based on the 1960 census and a 3.1 percent growth rate) is approximately forty three million. The country is divided geographically into four distinct regions: the Central Plains, the North, the Northeast, and the South. Language dialect and cultural idiosyncracies identify each of these areas but national unity is maintained through loyalty to the king and religion (with over ninety three percent of the population professing adherence to Theravada Buddhism).

Thai rural villagers are still overwhelmingly rice agriculturalists who generally own and work their own land (although recent technological developments, especially the increase in the number of roads, have drastically affected land ownership). Predominance of rice agriculture, however, is especially true of the Central Plains area, the South, and the Northeast. In some areas of the North other crops are grown due to the hilly nature of the land and in some areas of the South, notably in those provinces bordering Malaysia, raw rubber

production and tin mining represent other main occupations. Generally, however, over eighty percent of the population earn their livelihood through rice cultivation (1960 census) and maintain their residence in a rural area.

Bangkok is the largest urban center, having a population of over four million. The next largest center is Chiangmai, with a population of approximately two hundred thousand. Besides these two cities, there are only three more in the country with a population of one hundred thousand or more.

Administratively, Thailand is divided into provinces (changwad), districts (ampur), subdistricts (tambol), and villages (mubaan). Presently there are seventy two provinces in the country, each ranging in population from one hundred thousand to over one million five hundred thousand. The provinces, in turn, contain between three and twenty one districts, each ranging in population from under ten thousand to over one hundred thousand people. Each district contains an average of eight subdistricts, each of which in turn has an average of nine villages (Neher, 1974:5).

Since 1932 when the absolute monarchy was abolished, political control has alternated between a variety of forms of military control and parliamentary democracy. At the present time the country is under a military right-wing government. There have been two brief experiments

with democratic styles of government elected by popular vote within the author's direct experience, the first from 1969 to 1971, and the second from 1973 to 1976. Both governments were overthrown by military coup. The most recent government (at the time of this writing) has been in power for just over three years.

Regardless of the form of government, Bangkok has, for the past two hundred years, been the political, administrative, and economic seat of power. Outward appearance to the contrary, little or no actual decision-making authority is delegated to officials in up-country (i.e. outside Bangkok) areas. This reality is constantly reinforced by the consistent appointment of Bangkok-born-and-educated officials to all positions of higher authority within the political sphere throughout the country. Given the necessity for patronage connections to assure consideration for appointment to such positions, this practice is a natural tendency, since the people who control such appointments are, by definition, part of the Bangkok elite.

THAI VILLAGE ORGANIZATION

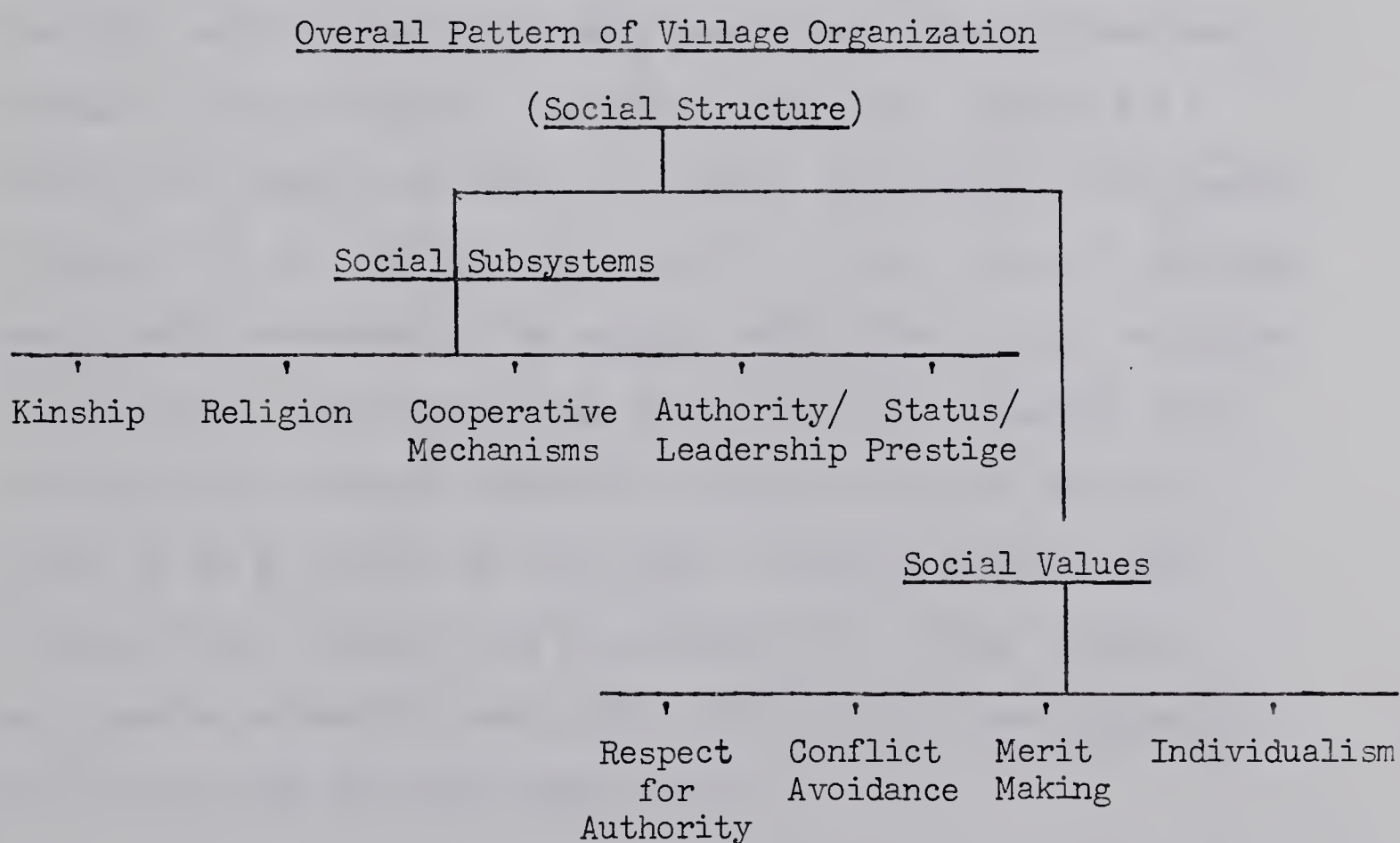
As indicated in the opening paragraph of this chapter, Yatsushiro feels that an analysis of the overall pattern of social organization within the village is necessary for the researcher to achieve some clearer understanding of the effects of individual subsystems on overall village organization (and hence give some clues as to which

subsystems must be influenced in order to bring about specific desired changes of behavior within the overall organization). In his paper he mentions as examples some specific subsystems which operate within the overall village structure in general to determine leadership activity. Among these are the religious system, the authority/leadership (political) system, and the status/prestige system. All of the above, he maintains, are highly significant within the Thai village social system (Yatsushiro, 1966:37).

The present author proposes to build upon Yatsushiro's "system-model" categories as outlined above to structure an examination of the Thai village social setting. In addition to the three above-mentioned foci, and in keeping with what Phillips (1965:22-23) and this author's personal experience has indicated are social realities crucial to an analysis of Thai village structure, two additional subsystems will be examined. They are 1) the kinship system, here including both the nuclear family and a "loosely defined, laterally oriented kindred" (Phillips, 1965:22), and 2) village systems for cooperative effort, both formal and informal.

Yatsushiro also mentions, as an outgrowth of village patterns of social organization, the development of "associated values and beliefs". Although it remains unclear as to which comes first - the values and beliefs or the patterns of social organization - it is quite clear that, within Thai society there are patterns of values

and beliefs which have effect on day-to-day behavior. The author proposes, therefore, to examine a number of social values which have been institutionalized within the Thai interpersonal arena. These values include: a) respect for authority (khwaam napthyy); b) conflict avoidance (cay yen); c) merit making (tham boon); and d) individualism. These values are clearly manifested in behavior acted out within the social context of the five above-mentioned village subsystems. For this reason they may be viewed as affecting the outcome of overall village organization. Graphically, the social structure which the author will outline appears as follows:



The interplay of the above diagrammed organizational and value orientations represents, to a large extent, Thai reality in the social setting.

THE "LOOSELY STRUCTURED SOCIAL SYSTEM" CONTROVERSY

Before turning to detailed examination of specific aspects of village social structure, a brief examination of research with a macro-view of the Thai social order may be beneficial. It will also serve as an introduction to some of the cultural idiosyncracies which will become apparent as we examine specific subsystems and their interconnections.

Almost without exception, studies which have been undertaken in Thailand in the areas of social system and interpersonal behavior research have referred to John Embree's early characterization of the Thai social system as "loosely structured" (Hans Dieter-Evers, 1969:4). Although Embree's conclusions have been disputed for a variety of reasons, and indeed it is even questionable as to whether he meant his research to indicate that the social system of Thailand was loosely structured in the meaning which this term has been given by subsequent social scientists, his article was a powerful force in directing subsequent studies of the many facets of Thai daily life. It may be helpful at this point to discuss Embree's observations since, although they were based upon a rather scattered and none-too-scientific basis, they left him with some interesting hypotheses about the Thai social system.

Embree's approach to the concept of "social system" was undoubtedly influenced by Parsons and the school of "structural functionalism".

Any examination of a social system would, according to this school, include as intimate defining criteria the related concepts of role, function, authority patterns, social identity, prescribed behavior, pressures to adherence to this prescribed behavior, and punishment for deviance. All of these factors make for what Riggs borrows from Marion Levy as his definition of structure, i.e. "a repetitive pattern of behavior in a society" (Riggs, 1964:8). Within such a definition individuals are tied to the social system by roles and membership in collectivities within the social system (e.g. families and friendship groups). Within roles and collectivity memberships certain behavior is defined as acceptable and other behavior deviant. Deviant behavior causes the individual to be subjected to punishment with a view to enforcing conformity. Such an analysis explains almost all behavior found in a given social setting. The remaining "idiosyncratic behavior" could not be classed as deviant since the social system did not prescribe punishment for it but rather ignored it. It was viewed as "psychological and thus by definition outside the domain of the social analyst" (Hans Dieter-Evers, 1969:5). Almost by definition the amount of such idiosyncratic behavior was small and unpatterned since, if its occurrence became frequent or predictable, the behavior was no longer viewed as "psychological" and the social system would step in to exert control as described above.

In relation to the above picture of social structure, Embree painted a disconcerting picture. On the basis of his observations, he

stated that he found Thai social structure

loosely woven ... here signifying a culture in which considerable variation of individual behavior is sanctioned ... The first characteristic of the Thai culture to strike an observer from the West ... is the individualistic behavior of the people (Hans Dieter-Evers, 1969:4).

The "psychological" factor seemed to have, if not taken over, at least made a much further inroad into the circle of determining factors which dictated responses within social situations. In Kirsch's words:

His [Embree's] Thai evidence indicated that the individual Thai actor did not simply link himself to and identify himself with a particular set of roles and collectivities with which he was involved. The individual Thai actor might remain tied to those roles and collectivities, but then again, he might not (Hans Dieter-Evers, 1969:56).

The same options are open to members of any social system. The concept of free choice in action is always there, but the related definitions of deviant behavior and sanctions to enforce conformity to expected standards remain to place strong pressure on the individual to conform. In Thailand, however, "when an actor chooses not to identify himself with his particular roles or collectivities (such as father, head of household, dutiful son) no sanctions are mobilized" (Hans Dieter-Evers, 1969:56). Since sanctions are not enforced, such behavior, viewed from the structural functionalist framework, could not be viewed as deviant.

On the other hand, due to the observed frequency of such individualistic behavior and the social acceptance (or at least tolerance) of both the action and the individual involved, it could

not be viewed as simply "psychological". Nor could it be seen as having no clear effect upon an analysis of the social order. In Kirsch's words: "The actor's significant social action and social identity could not be exhausted simply by isolating and identifying his involvement in particular roles and collectivities" (Hans Dieter-Evers, 1969:56). His individualistic, non-role, non-collectivity defined behavior often to a significant degree determined who he was and how he lived within the social system. Kirsch maintains that such behavior was "institutionalized, socially sanctioned, and culturally defined" (Hans Dieter-Evers, 1969:56) such that, in any social analysis it had to be taken into consideration. The "cultural definitions" mentioned by Kirsch could never attempt to define the specific behavior which might arise within the social system. This represented the individualistic nature of the person involved and his definition of the situation at hand. What was socially defined and institutionalized was the legitimacy of an individualistic, non-role based response to a situation as opposed to a role-related response.

This phenomenon within Thai social interaction clearly has effects at all levels within the social context. At an individual level it creates an indeterminacy relating to social commitments, including both formal and informal contracts. Within formal organizations we often find "safeguard" structures built into organizational decisions to make way for such non-role behavior without

undue strain on the whole system. For example, when the Government bureaucracy was declared to be under a "state of emergency" several years ago, all annual leave was cancelled. This state of affairs lasted for several years with no obvious emergency to be dealt with. During this period, the number of government "business trips" to up-country stations and programs flourished. Each trip was legitimized by at least a minimum of actual business, but it was well understood by all involved that such trips opened up options for individuals to take care of personal needs. Without such a structured outlet, it was feared, people would simply take periods of time off from work and thereby totally destroy any vestige of bureaucratic efficiency.

The awareness of Thai bureaucrats and their solution to the problem reflects the basic approach to the phenomenon of "individualism" within the Thai society. Indeed, there is even a Thai proverb which states: "To follow your own heart is to be a true Thai" (Potter, Diaz, and Foster, 1967:347). Such social sanctioning of individualistic behavior lends considerable importance to what might otherwise be considered simply psychologically or idiosyncratically motivated non-sanctioned behavior. Embree, in observing Thai interpersonal behavior, found that the exception was as much the rule as the rule itself in defining behavior patterns. He therefore concluded that the whole system was "loosely structured", i.e. sanctioning considerable variation of individual behavior.

Much of the controversy caused by Embree's remarks follows from his jump, which is logical in terms of the structural functionalist framework, from observations of interpersonal behavior in a variety of non-structured settings to a definition of the total social structure. Other researchers have documented behavior and structures which tend to indicate that the Thai system is far from loosely structured. This author's personal observations and experiences within the Thai social setting indicate that there exists a clearly defined and highly organized social structure including both role definitions and sanctions for non-role performance. The difficulty which Embree experienced in analysing the Thai system is that he utilized assumptions about principles governing social behavior which were appropriate for his own cultural background but which did not fit as a basis for analysis within the Thai situation.

In relation to this last statement, Embree's most crucial error was the use of the structural functionalist approach without considerable validation work within the Thai system. In order to utilize a theoretical orientation to examine a social phenomenon, it must first be established that the context of that phenomenon is identical to the context in which the theoretical orientation was developed. Once this has been established, one must further examine the terms of definition within the theoretical orientation and establish clearly the contextual validity of such terms within the new setting. There is no indication that Embree attempted either of the above crucial preparatory steps

to his research. In addition, given the brevity of his stay in Thailand and his simplistic use of unstructured observations of interpersonal behavior, his research could never have approached an in-depth understanding of the totality of the cultural realities which motivate and structure behavior within the Thai context.

Notwithstanding the above, Embree's use of the term "loosely structured" is useful in that it indicates clearly that the behavioral assumptions which structure Thai interaction (and the organizational structures which facilitate that interaction) are different from those structures which operate to pattern western social behavior (and which represent, in a societal context, western social organization). His initial observation and description of this difference was seminal to much of the research carried on in Thailand over the past three decades and has, in fact, inspired the initial approach of the present study. It now remains to examine this difference within the context of Thai behavioral assumptions and to document how those assumptions are acted out within the subsystems which, viewed as a whole, make up the Thai social structure.

THAI VILLAGE SOCIAL STRUCTURE

Having examined one perspective of the Thai social order, a more in-depth examination of the various subsystems whose functionings

facilitate the daily operation of social organization at the village level follows.

The Kinship System

More than any of the other subsystems within the Thai social setting, the kinship system represents the focus of an individual's emotional commitment over any extended period. In fact, Piker (1968: 779) maintains that "with the exception of the nuclear or slightly extended family and the Buddhist monkhood, there are no durable, functionally important groups in the countryside." Phillips dwells almost exclusively on examination of kinship factors in the opening chapter of his study of Thai peasant personality "because the family is functionally the most important social unity in the village" (Phillips, 1965:37). Yatsushiro also comments on the primacy of the Thai family and kinship relations: "The Thai family or household functions as the basic socio-politico-economic unit in the village social organization" (Yatsushiro, 1966:71).

To add perspective to the above-noted primacy of function of the kinship system, however, and with reference to Embree's loosely structured social system concept also described previously in this chapter, it should be noted that the Thai family and kinship system do not maintain that absolute determining force over the lives of its members as do the same institutions in other Asian cultures. deYoung maintains that, while the family is the primary social unit in the

village community

the social organization of rural Thailand does not revolve around a tightly integrated extended family or a larger kinship unit (as does, for example, social organization within traditional Chinese society). The Thai family pattern can best be described as a loosely woven structure within which considerable variation of individual behavior is permitted. This looseness of structure is evidenced also in the larger kinship groups: relatives tend to cooperate with each other in planting and harvesting work parties, but even in a relatively small village, blood relationship lines do not have the importance they do in other Asian countries" (deYoung, 1955:25).

In fact, the cooperation noted by deYoung around work-related functions can not be tied exclusively to kinship since, in most villages, a large number of the residents are related to each other to begin with. Kaufman hypothesizes that the determining factors around harvest cooperation may be propinquity of residence and convenience to both parties. In a situation where the larger number of close neighbours are relatives anyway, it is difficult to determine with certainty which factor is most important, although kinship undoubtedly simplifies the organizing process. Nonetheless, Kaufman has found that many cooperative ventures, where they occur, are not based on kinship (Yatsushiro, 1966:84).

deYoung has made the point that, whatever the structure within the Thai village system, it must be viewed as a loose structure. He does not argue, however, with the observation that, of all the social units within the Thai village, the family and kinship system represent, with the possible exception of the temple, that social structure

which exerts the most influence on the individual, given the provision that individualism within the structure is still an accepted norm. Indeed, he adds that, given "the relative isolation of the village community and the relative lack of organized groups to compete for the individual's loyalty " (deYoung, 1955:71), the villager's attachment to the family group is naturally stronger than to other groups since, in most cases, there is limited opportunity for the individual to come into contact with other groups which might motivate such attachment.

Although this point will be dealt with in more detail later under an examination of cooperative mechanisms in the village, as an interesting observation it deserves mention at this time. Many western researchers have observed and commented on what appears to be an avoidance of formal group structures at the village level in Thailand to assist individuals in handling daily problem situations. There are, for example, no funeral associations to assist with death-related expenses as there are in Vietnam, and no formal credit associations as found within Chinese society. The only "benevolent association" to be found consistently in villages is the local temple which assumes this role in a rather passive manner. This author spent two years attempting to assist in the formation of rural youth groups at the village level to participate in cooperative agricultural and community-related projects. Despite the fact that the youth leaders of these projects had undergone four years of training

in leadership and group formation, at the end of two years in the field there were, to this author's knowledge, no youth groups which had developed any but short-term projects (and in many cases such groups represented some form of kin association). In the Thai village, all the major functions (funeral assistance, credit in times of crisis, and so forth) tend to be performed by the kinship group, a situation which, in a circular manner, tends to discourage the formation of extra-kinship groups. Within this situation of limited formal organization, the kinship group, regardless of the "looseness" of its structure and function, represents almost all that is organization in the village. The concept of organization in this setting is relative to the remainder of village structure.

At this point it is important to distinguish between the nuclear family (consisting of father, mother, and offspring) and the bilaterally extended family, this second forming the basis of the extended Thai kinship system. Kaufman defines this latter unit as the "spatially extended family" and includes in it all persons who grew up together in the same household (father, mother, and children) plus the affinal relatives of these household members (Yatsushiro, 1966:84). This second group, as pointed out above, is quite important in the daily workings of the village in that its members tend to cooperate with each other in economic, religious, political, and social affairs. In Yatsushiro's words "the extended family forms, in a broad sense, a multi-purpose cooperative" (Yatsushiro, 1966:72). Some authors

(Phillips in particular) argue that such cooperation is not consistent enough to indicate any social significance but, given the loosely structured paradigm, this author's experience indicates that it operates quite consistently and effectively in a variety of need situations.

Beyond its practical functions within the immediate family setting, the recognition of "kin orientation" is functionally important in other situations. Phillips maintains that "kinship provides the basic psychological model for all human relationships" within the Thai village, including those with non-kin (Phillips, 1965: 37). Examples speak of villagers referring to government officials as "father" or "uncle", the hope being that by paying the proper respect due to such kin-role definitions, the government official would in turn follow the role definition in terms of fulfilling the obligations associated with that particular role. Since a good father takes care of his children, this could benefit the villager in a variety of ways, depending on the power of the official.

Kin terms are also used to specify relationships of affection with friends and acquaintances, sometimes reflecting simply a desire to be polite in a social setting, but frequently meant to indicate "genuine feelings of warmth and obligation not too different from what the terms imply when used in their original kinship context" (Phillips, 1965:23). As in most situations in Thailand, the loose structuredness of such obligations is such that the obligation

suggested through use of kin terminology may not in fact ever be called upon or reciprocated. This is equally true, however, within the real kin relationship, so the model remains consistent.

Kinship, then, both real and ascribed, provides a basic mechanism for expressing degrees of attachment and, to some extent, social obligation within the Thai village setting. This mechanism, more than any other in the village (with the possible exception of the temple), tends to influence and direct activity within a wide range of frameworks. It is, for this reason, crucial to village social structure and to an understanding of behavior within that structure.

There remains one point which relates to the area of kinship and which is functionally important in the determination of behavior and effective relationships in the Thai village. This is the institution of patron-client liasons or the "entourage system". For a variety of reasons (religious, political, historical, practical), Thai peasants have traditionally chosen to ally themselves with someone richer and more powerful than themselves. Having established such an arrangement, they then attempt, in a variety of ways, to obligate themselves to this patron (and hopefully him to them). The end which the villagers hope to attain through this process is the patron's perceived protection and possibly financial aid in times of distress. Piker describes the situation as follows:

The villager feels one is ill-advised to fight one's battles for oneself. Derivatively, one seeks an influent-

ial benefactor who, if the desired particularistic relationship can be established, may smooth the road to security and affluence for the suppliant (Piker, 1968: 780).

In some village situations, the heads of the richer and more influential families establish through this system "entourage" relationships with many non-kin village members on an individual basis. Such liasons closely resemble kin relationships in form if not in name. They are characterized by the use of kin honorifics, loyalty on the part of the client to the patron, and particularistic rewards from the patron to the client when these are convenient. As long as the villager feels that there is some benefit accruing to him from the relationship, he will continue to support the patron through minor work obligations (helping harvest the patron's crops, clearing his canals, and so forth) or politically should the patron run for election or require some other show of public support. Should the patron fail to provide what is seen as adequate support (financial aid in times of troubles, effective political protection from the police or other potential power sources through use of his influence on the client's behalf), the villager simply searches out another patron and switches allegiance.

The entourage system forms the nexus of the Thai political system at all levels, from the national assembly to rural village. Neher maintains that

...patron-client relationships help shape the society into a national whole. They are not separate and isolated relationships (although when viewed from the point of view of the villager they represent a relationship strictly between

the villager as an individual and the patron as a more powerful individual) but connecting parts of a whole system of groupings. A patron becomes a client to a group higher in the hierarchy. Theoretically, it is possible to chart a chain of patron-client bonds from the peasant farmer to the highest reaches of the power elite (Neher, 1974:73).

The glue which cements the bonds of the entourage is, as pointed out above, perceived mutual advantage.

Kinship groupings, then, from the nuclear family to the spatially extended family to the imagined "kinship" of friends, acquaintances, and patrons, represent a crucial determining factor influencing behavior in village life. They represent, for many researchers, the main observable form of effective village organization in the village setting. In this author's experience, basic information regarding the kinship relationships of the main actors in any community development program in a village was essential in assuring widespread support for the program. If necessary kin ties were not present or could not be affected, the program was doomed before it could start. In this author's experience, the most effective way of securing popular support for a project within a village was through active recruitment of supporters who could call upon their kinship system to back the program. The same tended to be true of other attempts at influence within the village system.

The Religious Social Subsystem

The temple has been described by Neils Mulder as "the most

vital associative institution in the village" (Neils Mulder, 1973: 30). As such it represents the second most influential social institution in the village (second only to the kinship system described above). Indeed, in a very practical sense, the temple or wat represents that structure which demarks the functional boundries of the community. Mulder maintains that

most anthropological studies of Thai villages find that the only sociologically meaningful definition of a functional community is through the clientele of the wat. The parish defines the village as a community better than the arbitrary administrative boundries (Neils Mulder, 1973:30).

Given the central position which the temple as a social institution occupies in relation to the organization of village social gatherings, festivals, and cooperative village merit-making ventures, such a view is quite understandable.

The centrality of the temple in village organization stems from a number of practical realities of Thai daily life. The first of these relates to the status and prestige of the monks in general and the abbot of the temple in particular within the village hierarchy. The second relates to the peculiar function of the body of monks and the temple as the main source of merit for the members of the community.

Neils Mulder maintains that "the greatest prestige in Thai society is enjoyed by the professional monks [who] incorporate the most important ideals and values of Buddhist Thailand" (Neils Mulder,

1966:106). This prestige accrues partly from the fact that monks represent the ultimate source of merit for individuals within the village community. Villagers can gain merit most effectively within the Thai Buddhist tradition by performing some service for the temple and, by direct extension, for the monks who represent the temple. For the majority of Thais, merit-making is a very serious and important aspect of daily life. It represents the only certain way to "get ahead", to ensure oneself a better future.

Temple-centered activities make merit. For this reason, villagers make contributions to collective rituals, the building and maintenance of the temple, ordination activities of sons and relatives, and the feeding and providing for the other daily needs of the monks. Temple festivals and fairs, although thoroughly enjoyed by all, are also viewed as a source of merit. For this reason, individuals contribute food, funds, and labour to such affairs. The same motivations tend to be associated with participation in a variety of social rituals which form a part of recurring activity in the village. Relatives will pool resources for marriage and funeral celebrations under the dual motivation of kin obligation and personal merit-making (since presents and food are given to the numerous monks who preside at both these ceremonial gatherings). The distinguishing factor between a simple kin obligation and a contribution to merit-making is the vehicle of the village temple and the participation of the monks. Within the locus of the temple lies the ultimate source of merit. For this reason the temple

and the monkhood enjoy a central position within the village social system.

Beyond the position of representing the ultimate source of karmic merit, the temple serves an additional variety of socially relevant functions. Especially in those rural areas of the country where ready access to information and trained expertise is not available, the monks have traditionally been viewed as a source of educated advice. They prescribe medical cures, intervene in quarrels, act as marriage counsellors, tell fortunes, and are viewed in general as local wise men in the community. Traditionally this was, and in many cases today still is, a valid function, since the majority of Thai villagers drop out of school after completing grade four. In many cases this leads to a loss of any functional literacy which they may have developed through attending school. The monks, on the other hand, through entry into the monastic system, receive continual and progressive education. The monastic system thus exposes the monks to a variety of learning opportunities denied to the villagers. Although the majority of local monks do not reach the level of education of those few who study at the Buddhist universities near Bangkok, they nevertheless are in a position, due to their comparatively higher levels of education, to act as advice-givers for the village, a position which naturally increases their prestige. In summary, then, the influence of the monks is based to a large extent on their prestige which is based in turn upon their perceived religious merit in particular

and their greater knowledge and education in general.

In addition to the religious aspect of the importance of the temple, there is an additional factor which has traditionally maintained the temple in a central position within the organizational structure of the village. In many rural areas, the temple is, even without consideration of its prestige, the only physical communal facility in existence. In some areas there are government schools, but in many rural villages the temples still function as the local school facility as well. Even in those areas where there are schools, the relationship between the villager and the school is tenuous at best so that, for many reasons, the school's presence in the community is not socially meaningful. For a large number of villages, then, the temple consistently serves the function of a central meeting place. Villagers gather at the temple to read the newspaper (those who can), to discuss what news they hear on the radio, to gossip, or to meet formally for a variety of purposes. For this reason, the temple tends, especially in rural areas, to serve as the "social, political, and recreational center of village life" (Phillips, 1965:36).

Notwithstanding the above, some monks maintain that, in present day Thailand, the functions of monks and the temple have changed.

Tambiah writes:

Phra Siri [Assistant Secretary General at Mahachulalongkhorn University, a campus for monks] says that in the

the last 70-80 years the monks have lost their previous roles and status as a result of Western civilization and the modernization of Thailand. Secular schools, hospitals, courts of law, recreational facilities - all have taken away from the previous functions of the wat" (Tambiah, 1970:68).

To some extent this represents the new reality for Thailand. Especially as youth become more educated and experience alternative status systems, the role of the monks and the local temple will continue to evolve.

At the present time within the Thai culture, this evolution has reached a stage where the monkhood and the institution of the temple are being requested more frequently to assume an active role in secular affairs. This is especially true in the sensitive border areas where government initiatives in local administration and development need the active support of the monks to ensure popular participation. Buddhist universities have furthered this process by introducing courses in Community Development and related subjects and by encouraging monks to spend periods of time participating in development activities in rural areas. In Chapter IV of this thesis, this particular development will be examined more closely. Suffice it to say at this point that, even as the functions of the monkhood evolve, the temple remains a centrally important social structure within village organization. Its progressive involvement in secular affairs has simply added another element to its already powerful influence over village affairs.

Moerman summarizes the overall functions of the temple thus:

The temple acts to equalize private wealth (by providing assistance to the needy and social acceptance to all), to structure voluntary kinship (through cooperative efforts centered both on temple affairs and community development projects), and to provide an enduring corporate organization which trains and certifies village leaders and holds village property. The temple, although a focus of village loyalty and a repository of Lue tradition [Moerman's village in Northern Thailand was a Lue village] also binds the local community to the nation (through the medium of Buddhism)" (Moerman, 1968:167).

The authority/Leadership Social Subsystem

We have come to realize that the nature of leadership patterns in a community is one of the most important of all factors influencing cultural change ... The New England town meeting, so dear to most Americans as exemplifying simple, uncomplicated democracy in small communities, is just not a common pattern in the world, and programs based on the assumption that this kind of decision-making body exists [everywhere] or can be created will usually fail (Foster, 1973:121-122).

Even with the above brief examination of the village religious subsystem, the reader will have become aware that, at least in the relationship between the abbot, the other monks, and the villagers, there exists a clear leadership structure functioning within the Thai village. Phillips and Wilson, writing about the prospects of utilizing various leaders in the community to strengthen internal village security in areas coming under communist influence, comment:

[the abbot's] specific approval should be considered as essential to the success of any course of action not fully sanctioned by tradition ... The abbot, in particular, customarily plays the part of counselor and advisor to the community on matters both sacred and profane, and his disapproval could drain the vitality from any effort (Phillips and Wilson, 1964:34).

In addition the the abbot who clearly is influential as a community leader, there are present within the village several additional important sources of authority and leadership, both traditional and recently instituted, whose function is to influence community affairs on a day-to-day basis. The sources of leadership can be divided into three main categories: 1) individuals who fulfill specific role positions within the village structure. Included here is the headman of the village, the headmaster of the school (if the village has a school), the local abbot, and "village elders [who are] wealthy men of a religious background who may head village factions" (Potter, 1976: 191) and who act as patrons in entourage relationships; 2) various functional groups formed to carry out specific duties for the community at large. These include the temple committee, the village council, and various government-initiated committees with specific functions within the village; and 3) the Thai Government's rural administrative structure including the District Officer and the subdistrict (Tambol) councils.

In order to understand the potential effects of these various sources of leadership in relation to overall village organization, it is necessary to briefly examine the role definitions of each of the above leadership positions as they are acted out in the community. The following sections will delineate the traditional powers and limitations of these leadership roles as they relate to the present-day village situation.

Individual Leadership Roles within the Community

a) the Headman (Phuyai Baan)

Perhaps one of the most complex and psychologically frustrating leadership positions in the village is that of the headman or phuyai baan. Each of these elected representatives of the village is voted into office by the adult members of the village and generally serve for life or until retirement at an old age. Their function is that of a connecting link between the government on the one hand and the people on the other. Duties of the headman include maintaining law and order in the village, keeping records of births, deaths, and in some cases land transactions, capturing criminals and delivering them to the police, acting as mediators in disputes and, where necessary, mobilizing villagers to build and maintain roads, wells, dams, and other facilities which will benefit the village as a whole. In Potter's words: "The headmen are the instrumental leaders of their administrative villages; they are responsible for seeing that things the villagers and the government want done are done" (Potter, 1976:217).

Though empowered with what, on the surface, appears to be a fairly clear-cut role, the headman's position is, in fact, fraught with frustration. On the one hand, as Yatsushiro's study of the Northeast shows, the vast majority of the villagers surveyed viewed the headman as "their representative to the government rather than merely a government official stationed in the village" (Yatsushiro, 1966:56). The villagers view the headman as representing their

interests to the outside government agents and, as Moerman describes the role: "...protecting the village from the demands of the central government" (Potter, 1976:217). On the other hand, the headman are viewed by the outside government agents (such as the District Officer) as "their men" in the village. Boonsanong describes the headman/official relationship from the perspective of the outside official as follows:

Every month the headmen are summoned to a meeting with the District Officer and his staff. They present reports about their villages to the officials and receive instructions from them to carry out "actions" on behalf of the government in their villages... the elected headmen whom the peasants regard as their representatives are in fact in no position to represent them with regard to their interactions with the bureaucrats. Headmen are merely agents of the bureaucrats, to whose organization headmen do not belong [headmen are not actually government officials] and whose status they do not share (Hans Dieter-Evers, 1969:95).

Thus, on the one hand headmen are expected to represent and be loyal to their village constituencies while on the other hand they are expected to carry out the policies of the central government. Since such policies may at times not represent the better interests of the villagers, the headman is placed, through his middleman role, in a precarious position. In order to effectively represent the needs of his village, he must retain the favor of the District Officer through whom funds and other favours flow. In order to maintain such a favorable relationship with the outside officials who, it must be remembered, are involved in a similar relationship with their hierarchical superiors, the headman must carry out projects which may not meet with the approval (or at least not speak to the priorities)

of his electorate. In some situations where the headman has energetic personality along with the drive to make projects work and the ability to work with both villagers and officials, he has the potential of developing a strong leadership role in the community. The fact, however, that he is subject to

the advice and support of the powerful men in his village - wealthy landlords, influential teachers, monks, and entrepreneurs - whose approval he needs before he can implement government policy or start any important undertaking (Potter, 1976:218)

clearly limits his potential for authority in decision-making.

Notwithstanding the above, the headman represents, to both the government and to most of the villagers, the official village leadership in community affairs. In his study of the headman as a synaptic leader, Moerman suggests an apt analogy to describe the headman's role in relation to the outside world: "The traditional Lue house with its solid walls, tiny window, and single door is an apt symbol of Ban Ping's accessibility to officials. The headman is the door" (Moerman, 1969:543).

b) the Schoolmaster (Archan Yaai)

Within those communities where there is a school, the local schoolmaster represents an important informal source of community leadership. Phillips and Wilson view individuals holding such positions as central to attempts to organize village efforts for increased solidarity in the face of the communist threat. They comment:

Although they have no formal authority, [the headmaster's] informal power is considerable. Because of their relatively modern outlook and the likelihood that they have instructed most of the younger people in the community, they are often the most respected secular leaders in the village (Phillips and Wilson, 1964:33).

One of the reasons for the high prestige of the headmaster is that, like the monks, they have a much higher level of education than do the local villagers, since all teachers have to complete a minimum of ten years schooling followed by two or three years of teacher training. Another reason which is most practical is that, especially for teachers being trained in rural teacher training colleges, part of the training emphasizes those physical skills which are useful when a teacher is situated in an isolated area. Thus most male graduates of teacher training colleges have some knowledge of construction, electrical work, mechanics, and agriculture as well as formal academics while female teachers are taught skills in dress-making, cooking, house-management, and so forth. Teachers and the headmaster represent to the villagers, therefore, a source of practical knowledge as well as an educated link to the happenings of the outside world (and a potential source of advancement for their children). In fact, Phillips and Wilson conducted a survey in which

Assistant District Officers unanimously reported that, in intra-village problems or conflicts, the individual most frequently sought out for counsel or mediation was the head school-teacher, along with the local Buddhist abbot, by preference over the local headman (Phillips and Wilson, 1964:33).

In terms of areas of leadership, the potential for involvement

of the schoolmaster is, in theory, wider than that of the local abbot. The community-at-large generally expects the abbot to be a moral leader, separate from involvement in mundane daily aspects of life in the community in his role as their spiritual ideal. Tradition thus works against the active involvement of the abbot in community affairs (although, as noted above, this is changing as a result of the active encouragement of the government). The schoolmaster, on the other hand, is not expected to hold himself separate from the realities of daily existence in the village. Yatsushiro, in his study of the Northeast, found, for example, that

the principle, especially if he lives in the village, is usually active in village affairs generally, and not merely restricted to educational matters. Frequently he is a member of various village bodies, such as the temple and village development committee. Such a principle or school-teacher can be regarded as one of the real leaders of the village community (Yatsushiro, 1966:91).

Through his participation in village affairs, the schoolmaster often manages to put his generally more modern and sometimes progressive ideas and experience to use. The villagers are thus exposed to potentially useful innovations. In some cases, school-teachers and principles find themselves in the position of teaching in the village where they were born. Often such individuals actively farm land as well as teach school. Both of the above conditions tend to extend their influence greatly since, as Yatsushiro states, such various involvements put them "on an equal footing with the local farmers" (Yatsushiro, 1966:91), thereby lending their ideas and suggestions additional credibility.

There remains one additional aspect of the potential role of the schoolmaster/teacher as leader in the community which must be mentioned. All teachers and schoolmasters are government employees (or karachagan). This, in a sense, affords them an additional source of status within the community, since all government officials are highly regarded in a status sense. The fact that they are government employees, however, has another implication. Since school personnel are employed by the government, they are very much under the control and influence of government policy. Should directives come from the Department of Education for specific types of programs to be implemented, generally the schoolmaster and his teachers would comply with the directives for fear of their positions and/or the loss of the support necessary to carry out their roles. Potter explains:

Additional structuring [to village activity] is supplied [supplemental to the kinship and other social subsystems] by the larger, authoritarian, centralized, and stratified society within which the village exists. Government bureaucrats who administer this society have authority over their representatives in the village: the village headmen, the head teacher of the local school, and the clergy. If the government insists, its orders will be carried out, by force if necessary (Potter, 1976:148).

Although in this author's opinion and experience Potter exaggerates when he talks of the use of force, the potential for loss of promotion or cut-off of promised funds does represent a realistic threat to those individuals who do not respond to government directives. The central government thus maintains a potentially useful ally in the person of the schoolmaster should it decide to implement a particular policy or program.

The village schoolmaster, then, derives his influence partially from the status of his association with the central government, an association of which all villagers are clearly aware, partially from his education, both academic and vocational, and partially from his "outside connections" , which may be potentially useful in accessing funding or support for special activities in the village. The potential leadership role for individuals occupying this position, given their multiple sources of influence, is generally considerable and normally felt in many spheres of village activity.

c) the Abbot

The local village abbot's potential as a village leader has already been touched upon several times above. Kaufman's description of the abbot as "undoubtedly the most influential, the most respected, and thus the most important individual in the community" (Yatsushiro, 1966:93) is, in this author's experience, a generalization since there are certainly those individual abbots who choose not to become actively involved in the secular affairs of the village. There are also those who have just assumed their positions and thus do not command the respect which comes with a long term of office. Generally speaking, however, the abbot is an influential leader in the community, even in those cases where his leadership simply involves the proffering of advice or agreement that a specific plan for innovation is appropriate. "Leadership" in the abbot's case is generally based upon the respect afforded him, and

the actualization of his leadership usually involves his legitimation of a project through judicious use of his opinions, although, as noted above, the government is attempting to involve the Sangha (or Buddhist monkhood) in more active participation in community development efforts in rural areas. Suffice it to say at this point that the abbot's positive support of a project is often the pre-requisite to villager participation. The potential role of the abbot with reference to village development, therefore, is crucial. Keyes stresses this point in his discussion of local leadership at the village level:

A permanent monk, particularly if he is an abbot ... who takes an active interest in lay affairs is not a person to be crossed by either local leaders or government officials, for the laity who belong to his congregation would follow the lead of such a monk in preference to that of a local leader or official... [His] passive reaction to some proposal can be as devastating as open contradiction (Neher, 1976:230).

d) the Village Elders (Phuyai)

The remaining source of "individual" leadership within the village community is represented by the village elders, those "wealthy men of a religious background who may head village factions" (Potter, 1976:191). To this point the village leadership roles which we have discussed have been of the "synaptic" type, meaning that the most important part of their function and their source of legitimation has been their role as a link to the extra-village world. To a large extent, the roles and statuses of these leaders have been based on

authority or systems which emanate from outside the village (i.e. the National Government or the Thai Buddhist Sangha organization).

In the case of the village elders, however, "statuses are a function entirely of the peasant social structure rather than a consequence of attachment to institutions which link village and national society" (Neher, 1976:221). Elders' status and influence is based entirely in the concrete personal interrelationships which have been established in the village as opposed to the status bases of leaders such as the headman, the abbot and the schoolmaster.

While no one factor defines a sufficient base to clearly and consistently identify an individual as a village elder, several characteristics tend to be common among such individuals. Keyes notes four major determinants of the necessary status to attain such a position. He maintains that

wealth, religious achievement, management of activities with illicit and/or immoral overtones, and, perhaps, standing within kin groups can be translated into village leadership positions [for village elders] (Neher, 1976:223).

The combination of any number of the above factors generally involves sufficient status for the individual to be included in the village elder group and, given the obvious power of the individuals who possess the above characteristics, such villagers potentially exert considerable influence over their less powerful neighbours and kin. Many such individuals, by virtue of their wealth, are naturally

patrons to the less fortunate villagers in the community and, by virtue of the respect and deference afforded them for this reason, can exert even greater influence in the local community. Kaufman speaks of the "power that a respected farmer with money has over many other farmers and landless villagers who are dependant upon him" (Potter, 1976:195). In a case in which the present author was involved, one wealthy woman insisted that several families withdraw from participation in a community development project because she viewed the program as an attack on her power.

In many cases, however, the power and leadership potential of the village elders can be used beneficially for the community. In one community in the North, several government departments attempted to introduce tobacco farming by approaching an elder in the community and convincing him to assist them. When he publicly approved of the project and planted some of his land in the new crop as well, many of the local villagers followed suit. The result was a successful agricultural innovation which might have required considerably more time and effort had it not been for the government's ability to tap into the leadership and respect afforded this village elder by the local community.

The village elders tend, by virtue of the respect afforded them and their personal power over segments of the community, to sit on the various village "communal" groups which concern themselves with

maintenance of the village functions. The temple committee and the village advisory committee are examples of such groups. The elders' roles in relation to these various village committees will be described in greater detail below. They also tend to perform the function of a village fund-raising committee for community ceremonies and construction projects and, in some cases, to act as mediators in the case of local disputes. In some United States Overseas Mission (U.S.O.M.) reports, specifically those dealing with the Northeast, village elders have been noted as the organizers of "home guard" groups for village protection (Neher, 1976:222).

As a final note in considering the leadership roles of village elders, it is important to differentiate between true elders i.e. those who stand in their own right as leaders in the village, not depending on the support of the other synaptic leaders in the village, and those who are really members of the entourages of the headman, the abbot, or the schoolmaster. While these last play an important role in village decision-making by advising those who occupy key village leadership positions, they do not influence the decision-making process to the same extent as do those elders who stand on their own as leaders and the heads of village factions.

This last point is particularly important in attempts to identify those individuals who will be influential in mobilizing support for projects or programs. Keyes maintains that "in attempting

to identify who are the key people in a village whose support is necessary for the mobilization of villagers for some activity, it is necessary to recognize that there are only a few men who wield real power" (Neher, 1976:236). The process of identifying who are the true leaders involves analysing the various village factions and entourages as they function on a day-to-day basis. Through this process, those elders who have effective power to influence village affairs will stand out. These are the individuals who must be reached if their power is to be used to support village development. Through ties based on patron-client relations, kin relations, religious and political alliances, respect for age and experience, economic considerations, or any combination of the above, these men are in a position to exert a powerful influence over others in the community. They represent, therefore, a leadership source of singular importance in the Thai village.

Task-related Groups within the Village

The realities of popular participation in the Thai political system indicate that, in general, a large percentage of the village population chooses for a variety of reasons not to take an active or direct part in the political process. Those "individual leaders" described above obviously do not fit into the "non-participating" category of the population, their roles in the political spectrum having been described in some detail. At the same time, within this particular group there appears to be two separate kinds of leadership

function. The first is the "synaptic" form of leadership which focuses on creating and maintaining effective links between the village and patrons or political figures outside the village. The second kind of leadership function focuses on the inner dynamics of village affairs and concentrates on wielding influence within that limited arena.

Neher, in his analysis of politics in rural Thailand, provides us with an even more complete picture of the village political structure. He has identified three major groupings of individuals which, he maintains, represent the totality of political (i.e. leadership) organization within the Thai village. Because of the importance of this structure to an understanding of village leadership and because Neher's analysis represents, in this author's experience, the most accurate description of leadership strata within the Thai village available in the literature, Neher's text is quoted at length below:

...three groups of villagers, the "apoliticals", the "politicals", and the "elite", can be more or less distinguished on the basis of the following criteria: contact with officials, group membership, participation in the planning of development projects, and knowledge of the political process. The apoliticals, who comprise some ninety percent of the rural population, have had no direct contact with district officials and are not members of organized groups. They have not participated directly in project formulation, and are generally inarticulate in describing how projects are devised and implemented.

The politicals include villagers who have a high degree of contact with officials and are members of structured organizations, such as commune councils, farmers' groups, irrigation associations, village temple committees, and cooperatives. The politicals participate in various village and commune programs and have a rather clear understanding of such projects.

An upper stratum of the politicals comprises the three or four members of the village who are directly involved in authoritative decision-making and who are perceived to be leaders. The members of this small group function as the interest articulators and aggregators, as links between villagers and officials, and as actual decision-makers. In their roles as patrons and in their official capacities, the members of this elite are involved in almost every aspect of village politics (Neher, 1974:49-50).

The leadership role of the politicals in the village setting has traditionally been acted out through two primary routes: 1) direct appeal to patron-client relationships (or use of such relationships to bring influence to bear) on a one-to-one basis either outside the village or at the village level; or 2) participation in the traditional village functional groups (such as the temple committee, the village council, and, in modern Thailand, through some of the government's more recently created village organizations). The goal of such participation is generally the influencing of decisions relating to village issues through the above-mentioned decision-making structures. It is to an examination of the operation of these village committees and organizations that this study now turns since much of the reality of the operation of three levels of political strata outlined by Neher above is observable within these social structures.

a) the Temple Committee (Kana Kammakarn Wat)

Although most authors note the dearth of any on-going functional groups within the Thai village (with the principal exception of the loosely structured kin grouping) almost all make note of

the relative importance of at least one major on-going functional group related to the temple and, at times, to village affairs. This entity in the "temple committee", a group charged with the responsibility of "looking after the affairs of the temple as they directly pertain to the village community" (Yatsushiro, 1966:46). (The internal affairs of the temple dealing with the monks, novices, and other aspects of the temple community are under the direct supervision of the abbot). Yatsushiro maintains that "of the few formal organizations in the village, the temple committee is probably the most important and certainly the most active" (Yatsushiro, 1966:46).

Members of the committee are generally older, more respected men in the community who have spent part of their lives as monks themselves. On the basis of this experience, then, and the respect afforded them because of it, they tend, in cooperation with the local abbot and villagers, to coordinate those activities of the temple that require interaction between the village and the temple. Such responsibilities include maintaining the temple buildings in good repair, coordinating merit-making construction projects involving enlargement of the temple facilities, assuring that the monks are properly fed, assisting in the preparation of religious and social festivals and rites as well as any other matters which require village assistance and/or participation in temple affairs.

As pointed out above, by far the majority of community

social activity occurs at the temple or is related in some way to the temple. Such occasions include religious services per se, as well as local fairs which generally have an outward veneer of religious origin but generally are viewed by the villagers as opportunities for an enjoyable social occasion. Potter mentions another socially significant function of the temple, that of providing a limited source of community property ("mats, dishes, plates, and so on" Potter, 1976:214) which villagers can borrow for festive occasions within their smaller kin groupings. The temple committee bears the responsibility of organizing and carrying out all the above functions and, in addition, controlling temple funds (since monks are prohibited by the rules of their order from handling money).

The wide scope of the above roles and the uniqueness of the "community-wide" focus of the committee functions affords the members of the group high status. In actual fact, they generally already have a high status in the community. The fact that the abbot has nominated them to sit on the committee simply augments and reinforces their present positions within the community. In Yatsushiro's analysis, the temple committee members are "not only highly respected but usually represent the real leaders of the community" (Yatsushiro, 1966:46). In the sense that the majority of the village-wide activities coordinated by the committee (and representing, in most cases the only village-wide activities which occur within the rural experience) occur either at the temple or through some form of interaction with the temple, this is undoubtedly true.

Phillips and Wilson, on the other hand, as part of their analysis of the Thai village system with a view to organization for protection against communist insurgency, express the opinion that "the tasks of the temple lay committee have by tradition become so confined to temple administration that any attempt to expand its function to other areas would meet with failure" (Phillips and Wilson, 1964:31). What these two analysts perhaps overlook is the fact that there are, within the Thai village, a limited number of "politicals" who are willing or interested enough to become involved in any form of community-focused organization. In many villages, the membership of the temple committee is almost identical with the other main village functional group - the village council - although the temple committee, because of its functions in relation to the temple, tends to have more status (and thereby more potential influence) than many of the village councils. In those cases where membership of the two groups is identical, however, it is difficult to write off the temple committee as a group with little potential influence in community affairs. The membership constitutes

the natural, informal leaders of the village and as such they [must be seen to be] actually or potentially the most important agency for local action or government. In some villages they become an effective council of community representatives (Blanchard, 1958:403).

b) the Village Council (Sapha Mubaan)

As indicated above, the village council, where one exists as a semi-formalized group, is often identical in membership to the temple committee. Keyes describes the council as "an informal group of mature male 'elders' who possess one or more of the traits of wealth, experience in the Buddhist monkhood, skill in one of the traditional arts, or ability to intimidate other villagers" (Keyes, 1967:9). Mizuno, in describing the effective leadership in one of the Thai villages which he studied, made note of the village council in the light of its important advisory function: "The most prominent leaders, men from the wealthiest strata of the village, form an informal advisory council to help the headman manage temple and village affairs" (Potter, 1976:212). In Keyes' village of Baan Nong Tuan in the Northeast, these same individuals formed the membership of the temple committee, a "school committee", and the government-instituted "community development committee" (Potter, 1976:213), thus clearly representing the totality of political involvement within the village.

The function of the village council is to discuss various issues affecting the community, advise the headman as to various paths of action to follow, and assist the headman to motivate villagers in carrying out village projects where necessary through their active support of his requests. The structure of the group itself is very loose, to the extent that Keyes refers to it as a "putative formal

group" in the sense that they seldom meet officially as a group (Neher, 1976:222). Consultation, following the loose structure of the group itself, is not always carried out through the medium of formal meetings. Generally the headman visits the key leaders individually or invites them to an informal gathering at his home. The necessity for such consultation concerning "matters of village policy toward official demands, mobilization of village-wide activities, and important trouble cases which threaten to involve the police" (Moerman, 1969:542) reflects the deference shown by the headman to the opinions of the collective group of village politicals as well as the tenuous nature of the headman's actual power and authority within the village. Yatsushiro observes that "not infrequently some of these village elders exercise far greater influence in the body politics of the village community than the Phuyaibaan (headman)" (Yatsushiro, 1966:59). Moerman sees this group within Baan Ping, a northern Thai village in which he carried out research, as "of even greater prominence [than the temple committee]." He continues: "It is this group of elders (muuthau muu kaeae) which, in many respects, governs Baan Ping" (Moerman, 1969:542), an observation with which Potter concurs. Potter goes so far as to state that the village committee is a group "whose approval [the headman] requires before he can implement government policies or start any important undertaking" (Potter, 1976:218).

In this author's experience, the relative power of the

village committee varied from community to community around such factors as the personality and personal power (i.e. wealth, prestige, effective outside ties with powerful patrons) of the village headmen. In those cases where the headman had a sufficient power base and was able to use his outside contacts for the benefit of the villagers he was in a position, to some extent, to act on his own. In all cases, however, the collective group of village elders and phuyais ("big men") represent a force within the village which is generally consulted as a matter of course by the headman on all village matters of any importance.

c) Government Initiated Committees with Specific Functions

In recent years the Thai government has attempted to establish various "functional associations with the purpose of promoting economic development and dealing with specific types of political demands" (Neher, 1974:60). Those groups most frequently noted in the village include farmers' groups, irrigation groups, "cooperative" groups, community development groups, and health and sanitation groups. As in the case with the other committees described above, the effective leadership and, to a large extent, the active membership of these new groups tends to revolve around these same individuals characterized as "politicals" by their involvement at other levels of village organization.

These local-level groups, organized as they are under the

initiative of the central government rather than at the expressed demand of the village leaders, are presently functioning less effectively than was initially planned. Membership in the groups in general represents less than ten percent of the rural potential (Neher, 1974: 70). This tends to reflect the fact that the groups are organized under the leadership of the local elites who tend to use the structures to meet their own needs. Although in some cases projects have been successfully organized, the majority of groups are tied closely to specific functions (the acquisition of inexpensive fertilizer from the government, accessing funds through a local borrowing coop, and so forth). Owing to this fact, the groups tend to have a limited overall effect on village organization with the exception of increasing access of the leaders of the associations to district and provincial authorities and to sources of supplies of such commodities as fertilizer, water pumps, and other machinery. The other main effect upon the leadership strata of village organization is the legitimation of the informal authority of the local leaders who had hitherto functioned unofficially as elders and patrons in the village but now, through the leadership structure of these new organizations, are viewed as official community leaders by the district and provincial officials. As a result of the increased interaction between these newly recognized leaders and the government officials, the "new authority of the group leaders goes considerably beyond that available [to them] in the past" (Neher, 1974:69). Increased interaction with officials has also tended to result in

an increase of resources allocated to group leaders and, through them as patrons, to the members of their groups.

These changes, however, remain tied to the limited specific functions of the group and, in most cases, to the particular demands of the elite and political who their activities. Neher notes that

For the vast majority [of villagers] the political system [of which these local associations and groups form a potentially important level] bears no meaningful relationship to daily activities. No mass grass-roots agricultural organizations have been created to meet the needs of villagers (Neher, 1974:70).

Requests funneled to the government officials tend, as pointed out above, to reflect the needs of a small minority of villagers. The potential functions of these structured groups in need identification and the communication of those needs in the form of specific requests for assistance from government authorities has not been realized for the common villager. As a result, membership in the associations, as indicated above, is not extensive and the potential impact of this form of village organization has not been maximized.

The Village's Link to the National Government: the District Council and the District Officer

To this point we have examined leadership patterns and functions which, with the exception of the newly formed local committees and associations described immediately above, are basically products of the peasant social structure, either exclusively (as in the case of

the village elders, the temple and village committees, and, to some extent, the headman) or as determined by the interaction between peasant social structure and the lowest levels of the government bureaucracy (as in the case of the schoolmaster, local associations, and the leadership roles of the headman and the abbot where such roles involve contact with extra-village authorities). With the development of modern forms of government in Bangkok and the demand for more articulated systems of administration in the provinces, the central government has attempted to set up formal links between the traditional sources of village leadership and its administrative personnel in the field. The newly formed village associations are one example of this government initiative.

Given the focus of this study, it is important to examine the relationship between the structure which has been introduced to formally represent the villages at the most basic contact level between headmen and government - the District Council or Sapha Tambol - and the official who, at the lowest administrative level, represents the government - the District Officer or Nai Ampur. The quality and characteristics of this relationship have a profound effect on the exercise of government "authority" in the village as well as on the effective articulation of village needs to those government agencies charged with assisting villagers with their problems.

By order of the Ministry of the Interior, Sapha Tambol or District Councils were established in the rural districts of Thailand in 1956. Officially the council is composed of all the Headman of the villages in the district (with one of the headmen elected by his peer group as Kamnan or chairman) in addition to the District Officer, one government school teacher, two qualified citizens, one principal of schools within the district, and all heads of government sections stationed in the district (Sangchai, 1969:34). The actual composition in fact varies from district to district with the usual functional composition being the Kamnan, the village headmen, and the District Officer. Other officials attend the meetings as they need to present projects to the Council or inform them of new programs.

The original purpose of the institution was

to cope better with the new problems facing rural Thailand - by channeling information more efficiently from the Central Government to the village level, by pooling funds for projects, and by mobilizing manpower for development purposes (Neher, 1974:57).

The nature of the vision which the central government had as it instituted this local structure is clear from the above statement of purpose: the Tambol Councils were viewed as an arm into the villages by which the government could, through the guise of local participation, determine and, to a large extent, control the form and direction of village development activities.

In practice, the Tambol Council remains, in most districts, a "paper organization". Yatsushiro's research indicates that in 1966 "there were only a handful of Tambol throughout the country where such a council was operating actively. In most places a Tambol council never existed" (Yatsushiro, 1966:67). Phillips and Wilson describe one group in which "council members were selected by headmen and attended only one meeting in two years where they 'approved' the Tambol and Muban budgets presented by the District Officer" (Phillips and Wilson, 1964:32). This author was the personal friend of a representative on a Tambol Council in an area southeast of Bangkok. In discussing the role of his council over a three year period, he indicated that the only issues dealt with which involved decision-making on the part of the council centered on repairs to local roads. In all cases the council assessed the District Officer's opinions and supported these. Neher (1974:59) describes one Tambol Council session on which the council was to decide on the use of its budget. The District Officer informed them that the Ministry of the Interior had specified that Tambol funds could only be allocated among four categories: vocational promotion, irrigation, roads, and education. In addition, funds had to be divided equally among the four. Since in this particular district the District Officer initiated, planned, and implemented vocational promotion and educational projects, this limited the Tambol Councils' initiatives to the remaining two areas. From a total budget of 11,700 Baht there remained 4000 Baht (\$200.00) for them to allocate "as they chose".

In the above case, the council chose two specific projects and divided their budget accordingly. The reaction of the District Officer is worth noting: "After reviewing the budget requests of the council, the District Officer - without consulting the tambol and village leaders - eliminated one of the projects and reduced the other, leaving a total of 1440 Baht (\$72.00)" (Neher, 1974:59). The power relationship between the Tambol Council and the District Officer in this district is clear. All final decisions rest with the District Officer. In this author's experience, this situation represents the usual Tambol Council/District Officer relationship.

This relationship makes abundant sense when we understand that the District Officer's chances of promotion are tied to his perceived ability to implement the programs and priorities indicated by his administrative superiors, not those brought to his attention by the villagers. Since demands are constantly being placed upon the District Officer by those above in terms of specific program directives based on political motivation, the District Officer, in order to ensure his own personal advancement, cannot allow decision-making to rest with a body of villagers who do not understand "priorities". The important flow of information and, in most cases, decisions is thus one way - from the District Officer to the Council members. Although the above is to some extent a generalization, it tends to reflect a realistic analysis of the position of the Tambol Councils in relation to decision-making.

The effect of the Tambol Council, given the above-outlined relationship, as an authority/leadership structure within village life is minimal. For the politicals who participate actively in the meetings, the structure has little meaning because of the domination of the council's decision-making functions by the District Officer. The practical result of such domination is that the village representatives cannot be assured of access to resources for their constituents through participation in council meetings. It must be remembered that a Thai leader's effectiveness is based on his ability to provide benefits for his followers. Viewed in terms of the patron-client system, the councils are relatively meaningless, since the connection between influence within the council (on the part of the village representatives) and the allocation of special funding for the initiation of projects for the support of one's clients is tenuous at best. The restricted budgets dealt with and the role played by the District Officer in the decision-making process have limited the potential scope of this local structure considerably. The one function which the Tambol Council does fulfill is that of administrative convenience to the Government, giving the vestiges of direct participation in development planning by those involved (i.e. the village representatives) while maintaining ultimate direction and decision-making power in the hands of the Government (i.e. the District Officer). At this stage in its development, then, the Tambol Council remains a relatively ineffective structure for the articulation and realization of village felt needs. In the

words of Phillips and Wilson (1964:32): "it has not become a means of expressing village solidarity." It does, however, represent one of the formal structures present within many districts and could be useful in facilitation or development activity at the local level if the above-described structural and cultural limitations could be effectively addressed.

THE PATRON-CLIENT SYSTEM: FUNCTIONAL BASE OF AUTHORITY

As described briefly above in the section on kinship, one of the key organizational principles which is operative in all social settings in the Thai culture is that of patron-client relationships. Sharp describes the importance of this system in his study of power and influence in Bang Chan:

A person may more readily win friends locally, or keep them interested and loyal, if he is able to establish a kind of patron-client relationship with people in the district seat, the capital, or some high ranking temple who have political, economic, or religious power or influence which can be called upon to affect the interests of [his fellow villagers] (Potter, 1976:195).

The concept of useful personal connections is central to the concept of Thai leadership.

Throughout the above section on authority and leadership roles in the village community, reference has been made to the patron activity of the leadership figures toward the people they represent. As a crucial part of the role definition of the authority figure, the

emergence of "proper behavior patterns" within the superior-inferior relationship (leader-follower, patron-client) necessitates the provision of benefits to the client by the leader/patron and the respectful subservience on the part of the follower/client. The leader is expected, in Neher's words, to

manifest [his] superior qualities by protecting, aiding, complimenting, and giving generously to those whose status is inferior. In return, the subordinate, or client, is expected to carry out tasks efficiently and with the least amount of trouble (Neher, 1974:2-3).

The implications of these expectations toward the people who assume authority and leadership roles in the village are important. The leaders described as central to village activity - the headman, schoolmaster, village elders, Members of the Tambon Council - are all viewed as patrons. They represent the "politicals" who wield varying forms of power over others in the village. The functional base of their leadership - as opposed to the fact that they happen to occupy a position defined by the government or their fellow villagers as a leadership role - is their ability to provide benefits for their clients. If the authority figure is not able, for any reason, to supply the resources or information required by his clients, he will lose his influence over them. The clients will seek out a new patron who can meet their needs, leaving the leader with only his title and position to identify him as an authority figure. His functional leadership power will shift to the new patron. Rubin (1973, 1974) describes several villages

with differing leadership patterns due, in large fact, to the ability or lack of ability of the headman or other authority figures to access power (i.e. benefits) for their community.

As the central government moves more and more to create functionally important leadership positions and viable local institutions in the village, they have found that the patron-client nature of leadership roles has implications for the kind of institution building they carry out. The Tambol Council, described above, has never been an effective local institution specifically because it has negligible resources which could be distributed to clients at the village level by headmen who participate in council activities. Since the council's resources are limited and controlled, headmen commitment to concerted effort to use this structure has not been noticeable. The same can be said of other government projects such as loan cooperatives and agricultural societies. Local leaders generally choose not to become actively involved because the tangible benefits which they can distribute to their followers are negligible. It is interesting to observe government officials (the District Officer, for example) providing benefits to their clients where possible and pleasing their patrons while at the same time demanding participation by villagers in associations which they and the villagers both realize will have limited returns in terms of benefits in the patron-client sense. While this contradiction may escape the District Officer, it does not escape the villagers who act

accordingly.

One Thai political analyst described the situation as follows:

To western eyes, the overlapping relationships and employment of personal influence [as demonstrated through the patron-client system] ... are probably factors contributing to the slowdown of development ... However these represent age-old socio-political facts indispensable to the Thai way of life. To change them would require a direct and massive attack on Thai culture and the Thais' personal attitudes toward their lives (Neher, 1974:V).

Any attempt to influence or develop present or new leadership patterns and roles within the Thai village setting requires, of necessity, a consideration of the present patron-client system in order to ensure effectiveness. In its attempts to motivate village leadership participation in development efforts, the Thai government and other related agencies will have to take the patron-client system into account and develop institutions which will facilitate its functioning rather than frustrate it.

THAI SOCIAL VALUE ORIENTATIONS

Human behavior is always motivated by certain purposes and these purposes grow out of sets of assumptions which are not usually recognized by those who hold them... It is these assumptions - the essence of all the culturally conditioned purposes, motives, and principles - which determine the behavior of a people, underly all the institutions of a community, and give them unity (Foster, 1973:19).

In the preceding section we have explored some of the patterns

of village organization and structure which grow out of and in turn affect daily life in a Thai village. In addition to these patterns of social subsystems by which the village is defined, Yatsushiro (1966:37) maintains that there are "associated values and beliefs" which are essential to a clear understanding of rural life. The assumptions under which people operate and the values which motivate them to behave as they do interact in a symbiotic manner with the social structures which develop in response to them to the point where it is often difficult to determine whether the value is an outcome or a determinant of social organization. Rokeach (1973:3) "assumes that the antecedents to human values can be traced to culture, society, and its institutions and personality" but is unable to indicate which of these factors is the most determinant of an individual's values. At the very least, however, an analysis of any sociocultural system quickly leads to the conclusion that such systems represent "logically integrated, functional, sense-making wholes" (Foster, 1973:13). Each institution within a society reflects the dominant values of the culture while individuals living within the culture act on the basis of those value orientations. It is this relationship which Yatsushiro points out in his examination of the Thai village system and insists is crucial to an understanding of the behavior which occurs within that system.

For the purposes of this study, values are defined as "normative standards by which human beings are influenced in their choice among

the choices of action which they perceive" (Gue, 1971:20). Within this definition as it relates to this particular thesis one word is particularly significant. It is the inclusion of the word "influenced". Within the Thai social system as pointed out above, there is considerable occurrence of individualistic behavior, i.e. behavior which does not correspond to commonly held expectations of social behavior. Indeed, one of the key values to be examined below is that of "individualism", a value which maintains that freedom to indulge in non-norm-prescribed behavior is, in fact, a socially sanctioned behavior pattern. In the Thai case, therefore, values must be viewed as "influencing" and not necessarily determining behavior outcomes in all cases.

In his study of values and value systems, Rokeach distinguishes between what he terms "instrumental and terminal values" (Rokeach, 1968:160). Instrumental values he describes as "single beliefs that always take the following form: I believe that such and such a mode of conduct ... is personally and socially preferable in all situations with respect to all objects". A terminal value represents an "internalized desire to see a specific state of affairs evolve" where such desires are not necessarily acted out through personal individual daily behavior (Rokeach, 1968:160). In relation to this distinction the four value orientations to be explored below (i.e. respect for authority, conflict avoidance, accumulation of merit, and individualism) fall under the category of instrumental rather than terminal. All

four relate directly to modes of conduct or social imperatives in daily living which may be observed in action in the village. All four represent "standards or criteria for guiding action ... for morally judging self and others ... and for justifying one's own and others' actions and attitudes and for comparing self with others" (Rokeach, 1968:160). In the final analysis, it is this translation of individual value orientations into the dynamics of interpersonal behavior which is significant. Through behavior, each value reinforces both the existing social subsystems as described above and similar value patterns among other members of the culture.

The four value patterns chosen for examination in this study are significant not only because they motivate behavior but especially because they all have some potential impact upon attempts to introduce community development within the Thai culture. In order to clarify the centrality of the above-listed value orientations to village life, each of the value orientations will be described in detail below and, where relevant, related to the social subsystems previously outlined. Their implications for community development will be examined in Chapter IV.

Accumulation of Merit

Among all the aspects of Thai religion in modern life, one all-important pattern stands out: the principle of karma, basic to the Buddhist doctrine, stands unchallenged

and unquestioned. Therefore the concept of merit and of the necessity of merit-making is as important as it ever was in the Thai religion. The social goal of the rural population, and also to a large extent the urban population, remains the acquisition of merit and preparation for one's future existence (Fitzsimmons, 1958:115).

If the Thai Buddhist villager can be viewed as committed to any one principle or value, it must be the concept of merit-making (tamboon). Yatsushiro (1966:45), in his study of village leadership in the Northeast, refers to merit-making as the "hard core of Thai Buddhism in practice; it represents the main driving force that sustains the individual through life." Fitzsimmons (1958:115) maintains that the average expenditures of a single family for merit-making represent twenty five percent of their total cash income while deYoung estimates the amount at fifty five percent in his village in the Northeast (Suksamran, 1977:9). Simply from the amount of time and the financial resources typically allocated to this activity, an observer can quickly come to appreciate the significance of merit-making to the villagers.

The centrality of this value in village life stems from two elements of Buddhist doctrine which play key roles in the Thai religious belief system. These are, in Kirsch's words: "...karma, the notion that every act has some ultimate religious reward or punishment attached to it, and the doctrine of multiple rebirths" McAllister, 1973:188). In relation to the concept of karma, each

man's present condition is viewed as a product of the various merits and demerits earned by his past actions. As a man performs generous or kind acts he accumulates positive merit while as he performs negative or unjust acts he collects negative merit. The ongoing balance between the two represents his karma and bears a direct influence upon what happens to him in his present and future life. Buddhists believe that a man who has acted in such a manner as to deserve positive merit in the past will be rewarded by wealth and high social position in his present and future life. Poverty and low social status result from a negative karma . Each man is thus in a position to determine his own fate in the world by the actions which he undertakes on a day-to-day basis. Each person is the creator of his/her own karma, either positive or negative, and thereby responsible for his/her present and future states of being in this world.

The second principle, that of multiple rebirths, reflects a belief that the process of developing karma to the ultimate state (nirvana) is long-term in nature, extending well beyond a single lifetime. This religious belief varies dramatically from the Christian doctrine which maintains that each person receives only one lifetime to determine his/her fate. Buddhists view each rebirth as a step toward the ultimate achievement of nirvana for all, although some more conscientious individuals will achieve it faster than others who perform fewer meritorious actions to

influence their karma.

It should be noted that although the end-goal of the process of working out individual karma is represented by nirvana, for the majority of Thai villagers the much more immediate goal is the improvement of their present state of existence through the short term effects of a positive karma. These more immediate results might be translated into the winning of the bi-weekly national lottery, or a sudden unexpected increase in good fortune or status. Tambiah asserts that the empirical objectives of merit-making generally are "wealth, health, long life, intelligence, power, high caste, and beauty" (Suksamran, 1977:7). The achievement of all of the above is tied inexorably to merit-making and the accumulation of positive karma. As a person's "moral worth" increases, so that person's state of existence in this world will reflect his worth through prosperity and good fortune.

Merit-making represents the link between the complex and sophisticated Buddhist world-view conceptualized in the abstract principles of karma and transmigration and the thoughts and motives of the Thai villager as he develops and re-creates his personal karma in daily life. It is through this structured, public, and often formalized process that the villagers accumulate merit and attain their end-goals both in this and subsequent lives. Kirsch maintains that, even in informal settings, villagers' religious

discussions and activities center overwhelmingly about the concept of merit and the ritual system of merit-making.

Although almost all Buddhist ritual is viewed as meritorious, some acts are perceived as deserving more merit than others. Tambiah lists meritorious acts in descending order of importance as follows:

- 1) completely financing the building of a temple
- 2) either becoming a monk oneself or having a son become a monk
- 3) contributing money to the repair of a temple or making krathin gifts
- 4) giving food daily to the monks
- 5) observing every Buddhist Sunday
- 6) strictly observing the "Five Precepts"

(Suksamran, 1977:10)

From this list it becomes clear that those acts which involve some intimate association with the Buddhist order of monks are perceived as producing the most merit. It is only at the lower end of the hierarchy that Tambiah suggests that the observance of the "Five Precepts" (which include such acts as assisting the poor) are viewed as potentially meritorious. With this exception, the main source of merit resides within the temple and the Buddhist monkhood, a fact which tends to reinforce and justify the high respect and status afforded religious figures in the village.

The above-outlined approach to reality related to the concepts of merit-making and karma has several implications within the Thai village setting. The amount of cash income and time devoted to this

activity has been noted above. A second implication which strongly affects social relations is the Buddhist view that all individuals are essentially unequal. According to this principle, all individuals, on the basis of their karma, can be placed at some level on a "moral hierarchy". Some individuals, specifically those who possess the outward signs outlined above by Tambiah, are viewed as morally superior. They are viewed in this light since the present state of their existence is interpreted to reflect their internal moral worth. The villager tends to view the world in terms of a hierarchy in which those who succeed, who are leaders, who are wealthy or intelligent are naturally morally superior to others who are less successful since these characteristics are the results/rewards which accrue to a morally superior karma. Kirsch terms this the Buddhist "conception of intrinsic inequalities and qualitative differences in individual moral value, a theory of 'unequal souls'" (MaAllister, 1973:189). Each villager is continually working toward improving his standing within the hierarchy, but the reality of the hierarchy is an unquestioned assumption which flows from the very concept of karma. This view of "unequal souls" as it relates to moral and social hierarchy can have a profound effect upon the development of indigenous community projects within the village as well as the process of need identification and participation by different levels of village residents in development activities. This implication will be examined in detail in Chapter IV. Suffice it to note at this point that it represents a potentially

serious limiting factor to mass participation at the village level.

A second outcome of this stress on merit-making relates to the observation that merit-making is the value par excellence within the Thai village which motivates future-directed activity of a long-term nature. It represents, for most villagers, the totality of future-oriented activity with the exception of planting crops and raising animals, both of which activities tend to be rather cyclical and short term in nature. Merit-making, then, stands in contrast to the notable dearth of other "development"-oriented activities of a personal or community nature within the typical Thai village setting. Given the social, cultural, and economic reality in Thailand, most villagers realistically perceive attempts at improvement of their personal positions as having limited potential for success. As described above, the wiser path to personal aggrandizement lies in the accumulation of merit and, where possible, the establishment of ties to a more powerful individual through the creation of entourage relationships. Outside of these two avenues, improvement of one's state of life is perceived as capricious at best.

In summary, merit-making appears to represent that value which motivates by far the largest amount of non-survival-oriented activity at the village level. Almost all ritualistic behavior in the village is related at least peripherally to the accumulation of merit for individual development. The government has noted the above and is

now attempting to present development projects in such a light that, through acceptance and promotion by the Buddhist Sangha, the villagers will view them as potentially meritorious activities, since all those activities which are not clearly related to merit-making and which cannot be immediately tied to the personal survival needs of the individual are relegated to secondary importance. In this sense, merit-making represents the outlet of popular choice for achievement-oriented and "development"-related activity among the Thai.

Respect for Authority (Khwam Napthyy)

...the attitudes of respect that one sees are perhaps distinctively Thai. Almost all the literature on Thailand refers, at one point or another, to the patterns of respect ... existing between people, both within and without the family ... The role of these respect patterns cannot be emphasized enough (Phillips, 1965: 32-33).

The second value to be observed within the Thai village context - formal respect for those in positions of authority - represents a logical extension of the "theory of inequality of souls" examined above. Those who are morally superior and who deserve to stand in positions of authority over their fellow villagers are expected naturally to assume their authority roles and care for their inferiors as benevolent superiors. The authority role may represent simply the position of an older child in relation to his younger siblings, it may represent the status difference between a villager and one of the village elders, or it may represent the formal diff-

erence between an ordinary citizen and a government official. Regardless of the form of status difference, however, the patterns of respect afforded superiors by inferiors are well noted in Thai culture and Thai ethnographic research. Kaufman (1960:31) describes the older-younger sibling relationship (phi-naung) as "the most important determinant of social behavior in the community." It is also one of the first observable facets of Thai interpersonal behavior at all other levels of age and social class relationship.

Socialization leading to the development of this value starts at an extremely early age with patterns and attitudes of respect drilled into each child in a variety of ways. The traditional "waj" gesture as well as honorifics which emphasize differences in status between social actors are learned almost before the child can walk. Each child quickly identifies his or her position within the authority structure of the household and learns the behavior appropriate for the various roles which that position entails.

Within the context of the school, some of the teachings contained in a government pamphlet used to promote "correct morals" in the society are of interest. Of the eleven "Characteristics of a Good Person (Sombad Khoong Phuu Dii)", three deal directly with superior-inferior relations:

- 1) Do not try to act in the same way as your superior
(meaning simply "Know your place")

- 2) Do not be concerned with your own comfort before the comfort of your superiors
- 3) If you are a superior [the assumption being that even students are superiors since the text is used at a grade four level] wherever you go, you should look after the comfort of your inferior

(Phillips, 1965:44-45)

Within the formal learning structure, then, as well as in the informal socialization processes of the family, the value of respect for authority is promoted at every opportunity. The end result of the process is that, within sibling and later friendship relationships, the individual's position in the authority structure assumes the respect of those younger than him. Such respect is willingly granted, for the elder is expected to take care of the younger dependent's needs, affording the inferior assistance whenever it is possible for him to do so. The symbiosis of this pattern, then, forms a tradition which carries on to all aspects of Thai interpersonal behavior.

Outside the family, this early socialization is translated into outward patterns of respect for all those perceived to be in positions of authority. Rubin (1973:425-445) describes in great detail the formal interaction which occurs between rural Thai officials (as superiors) and villagers (as inferiors). Such patterns of respect are based upon status inequalities flowing from perceived differences in age, wealth, power, knowledge, or religious and/or government role. Until the relative status of individuals within a social situation has been identified according to the above

criteria, it is difficult for any meaningful interaction to occur since the roles of the various actors are based on their relative status. Such roles cannot be played out without a clear definition of the status of each player.

The above value is translated, as indicated above, into formalized patterns of behavior characterized by deferential and respectful subservience while in the direct presence of the authority figure. One of the most notable of these patterns is the tendency not to question a superior's statements or add information to his statement which might prove him wrong. This pattern makes it extremely difficult for people in authority in Thailand to accumulate accurate data from subordinates without a direct request. Even under such circumstances full information may not be received, since inferiors tend to pass on only that information which they feel their superior wants to hear.

Within the village, the above pattern leads villagers to avoid making suggestions as to the needs of the village. Formal respect for the status of the village leaders requires subservience on the part of the ordinary farmers to the views of the elders, at least in the formal social setting. Such behavioral expectations tend to maintain the relations between superior and inferior at a formal and somewhat distant level, a situation which is expected by all concerned. Moerman describes a scene where a Provincial

Governor, through an address which was read by the District Officer, attempted to modify this arrangement vis-a-vis his officials and the villagers:

At one point in his address he [the District Officer] contrasted the villagers' old attitude of respectful fear toward the officials with the desired new spirit of intimate friendship between them. Here the District Officer and his audience burst into laughter, no longer able to contain their amusement at such strange ideas (Moerman, 1964:40).

In contrast to the intimate friendship encouraged by the Provincial Governor as described above, in most Thai settings the outward demonstrations of respect are those observed most frequently. Such behavior patterns result in outwardly smooth, conflict-free social situations. They also, however, have a potentially immense impact on the long-run efficiency of village social organization since decisions are often made by authority figures who do not have a true appreciation of the needs of those affected.

A second more positive effect of the value of formalized respect may be the wide-spread establishment of entourage or "patron-client" relationships between inferiors and those whom they perceive as potential patrons. Hanks, discussing status inequality in Thailand, observes:

In the West we consider a reciprocal exchange possible only between cooperating equals; inequality of station seems to constrain us. The Thai, however, because they assume symbiosis to form the basis of reciprocity, deem an inequality to be essential (Hanks, 1972:84).

Inequality of status within the Thai social order leads to socially defined patterns of mutual assistance, patterns which form for most Thai the only socially viable mechanism for ensuring relative security within a relatively insecure social context. Social inequality, then, forms the basis of the entourage system, a system whereby those less powerful attempt to align themselves with influential patrons, thereby protecting themselves from the daily uncertainties of village life. In this sense, the value of "respect for authority" is translated into a potentially useful cultural structure for those who are able to establish the requisite relationships.

The above-described patterns of respect tend to structure almost all formal interpersonal activity within the Thai context. In Kirsch's words:

There are virtually no social roles or interactions among Thai that do not carry some connotations of hierarchical differences in status... the Thai have no way to interact except in hierarchical terms (McAlister, 1973:195).

Such patterns form the hub of social activity in village Thailand and motivate much of the behavior which can be observed through village social structure.

Conflict Avoidance

...the main precept of social contact is: "Avoid face-to-face conflict". The strength of this rule in discouraging the expression of negative feelings may be seen in the [response to the sentence completion question]: "People who never show their feelings..."

Of thirty seven replies, thirty four indicated the positive value of such a quality (Kaplan, 1961: 281).

Closely related to the value of respect for authority is that of conflict avoidance, a value which ensures that almost all public social interactions are carried out in an amicable and outwardly cordial fashion. The observation that conflict avoidance is a value pattern is not meant to indicate that there exists no conflict in Thailand. Indeed, a survey by the United Nations in 1971 indicated that Thailand had the highest per capita murder rate in the world. What the "conflict avoidance" is meant to indicate is that, in normal interpersonal relations, face-to-face aggression is avoided. Klausner describes this phenomenon as follows:

One of the most prevalent patterns of social behavior in Thai village society is that of harmonious human relationships with one's fellow villagers and a concomitant avoidance of overt acts which express anger, displeasure, criticism, and the like (Klausner, 1972: 45).

Such social appeasement of others, motivated by a desire to avoid socially awkward and embarrassing situations with peers and superiors, is most obvious when acted out in the presence of authority figures as described above. The propensity for Thai villagers to avoid outward disclosure of displeasure, however, extends far beyond relationships with superiors. It extends to almost all public interactions in which conflict might conceivably occur.

The high religious as well as social value placed on the

avoidance of conflict adds support to the motivation of the Thai to shy away from confrontation, even in those situations where the individual must withstand personal affront to pride and dignity as a result. Buddhism emphasizes as part of each individual's growth toward spiritual maturity the avoidance of the extremes of the emotional spectrum. Klausner maintains that this applies equally to the socially acceptable emotions such as love and friendship but the clearest focus of this emphasis within Buddhist teachings centers on the avoidance of expression of such emotions as anger, hatred, and annoyance (Klausner, 1968). Phillips' survey of rural peasants demonstrates clearly the value which villagers place on hiding their true feelings from others in order to preserve a harmonious climate. He summarizes his findings as follows: "the most obvious fact about aggression is that villagers cannot tolerate its spontaneous, direct expression in face-to-face relationships" (Phillips, 1965:170-171).

As demonstrated by the results of the United Nations' survey, this does not mean that anger and hatred are never expressed in the Thai social setting. Such feelings occur naturally as part of human interaction. Within the Thai context it is simply deemed improper to introduce such anti-social emotions into direct and open expression. The Thai, "masters of the roundabout approach" (Klausner, 1968:5), have devised a variety of culturally acceptable mechanisms which serve to vent such emotions upon the appropriate parties while

preserving the social order and the facade of smooth and courteous interpersonal relations. A detailed description of these cultural devices is beyond the scope of this paper. It is sufficient to note that their effectiveness is recorded in Thai ethnographic literature (Klausner, 1968; Phillips, 1965). Through their use the value of "conflict avoidance" is reinforced as a central pattern of Thai social order.

As a final comment focusing on this value pattern, the author wishes to suggest that conflict avoidance along with the associated value of respect for authority form two aspects of the Thai pattern of social behavior called "Krengchai". This term truly defies exact definition in western terms, reflecting behavior patterns of self-effacement and over-consideration for the comfort and rights of others, at times to the extreme disadvantage of the individual exhibiting the behavior. Krengchai requires, for example, that requests being made of superiors be carried out through the use of third parties so that the potential embarrassment to the principals involved be minimized should the request be met with a negative response. Since krengchai behavior tends to increase social distance and formalize the setting in which it occurs, it can be seen to have a limiting influence in the area of interpersonal behavior, especially in those cases requiring open and frank communication.

Individualism

[Villagers] often pay little attention to the rights, obligations, and responsibilities which are supposed to form the substance of enduring relationships ... they offer a Siamese maxim to sanction these tendencies: "To follow your own heart is to be a true Thai" (Phillips, 1967:346-347)

The final value orientation to be examined is individualism, the pronounced tendency of the Thai villager to avoid binding interpersonal commitments, preferring instead to undertake actions and projects as an individual, thereby freeing himself from what he perceives as uncertain dependence on his peers. This pattern has been noted by numerous researchers of Thai social interaction (Phillips, 1965; McAlister, 1973; Tambiah, 1970; Piker, 1968) as having a major determining influence upon the manner in which Thais interact with others in a social setting and, by extension, upon norms governing socially defined expectations concerning patterns of mutual assistance and cooperative activities within the village.

The Thai propensity to focus on self-interest and independence has been described in a variety of ways by researchers undertaking analysis of village interaction. Piker observes that:

The Thai peasant enjoys a reputation for tenacious individualism ... Believing that the intentions of others vis-a-vis himself are callous, indifferent, or exploitative, the villager is reluctant to involve himself emotionally with others lest he be rebuffed (Piker, 1968:778-779).

Piker maintains that the only exception to this tendency is the willingness of villagers to involve themselves in quid pro quo cooperative ventures such as agricultural work exchanges and merit-making ventures as well as friendship-based social encounters of a casual, ad hoc basis. The first of these exceptions can be viewed as simply an extension of the "self-interest" motivation into a framework where it would be impossible to carry projects through to completion without some form of assistance. In the second case, long term, casual relationships are the norm, although their viability generally rests upon the implied understanding that the association holds no binding mutual commitment over time. The individuals are, in a sense, rewarded by the relaxed fellowship of the immediate encounter, the equivalent in a social sense, of the quid pro quo material benefits described above in relation to agricultural ventures.

Phillips makes note of this value orientation in his study of Bang Chan personalities. He notes:

The realities of Bang Chan are so weighted in the direction of atomistic and essentially non-relational considerations that [the bulk of Phillips' study focuses on] the individualistic nature of the villagers (Phillips, 1965:95).

In what must be regarded as a key insight into village reality in relation to the individualistic orientation of the inhabitants, Phillips notes that, even given the importance of merit-making within the villagers' psycho-social reality, "in Bang Chan 59 percent of the adult men are as willing as I am to ignore the institutional pressures to become monks" (Hans Dieter-Evers, 1969:26). Phillips

maintains that such a striking example of the willingness to avoid participation in culturally advocated activities represents a socially significant aspect of village life. The value orientation which motivates the Thai to "be true to one's own heart" represents for the villager a factor which supersedes cultural norms and, in the true sense of the word, becomes a norm in itself.

One of the clearest sources lending strength to this value orientation is Theravada Buddhism. In a preceding section this author explored the centrality of the value of merit-making in Thai daily life. The importance of merit-making stems from the principle that each person exists in a state of ultimate isolation. Individuals are self-responsible for the determination of their karma. Each person functions as a free agent, responsible only for and to himself within this framework. Buddhist canonical literature is replete with references stressing the centrality of this doctrine. One frequently quoted passage from the Dhamapada reads: "By oneself is evil done; by oneself one suffers; by oneself is evil left undone; by oneself is one purified" (Phillips, 1965:88). The resultant view of reality within the Buddhist world of the Thai villager reflects this individualistic framework, orienting the population toward self-serving behavior undertaken in a manner involving as little commitment to social obligation as possible.

The above is not meant to suggest that Thai are so deeply

religious that individual villagers weigh every action in terms of their individual karmic gains. Thai, called upon to rationalize individualistic behavior, will cite a variety of reasons for their actions. The basic effect, however, of socialization within a Buddhist philosophical framework tends to create a strong value base which legitimizes such behavior and which the Thai, if pressed, will be quick to mention. Such a value base imports a

fundamental legitimacy to the pursuit of individualistic self-concern. More important, it establishes a definition of social reality that assumes the ultimate reference of every person's act is himself" (Phillips, 1965:89).

This value orientation, stressing independence from obligation to others and freedom from constraint upon action of the individual, stands in apparent contradiction to two of the other values noted above - respect for authority and conflict avoidance. It also tends to fly in the face of one of the more prevalent forms of voluntary informal structural organization within the village - the entourage system. The apparent contradictions, however, stem from the difference between the western understanding of the modes of behavior expected of a person characterized as "individualistic" and those deemed socially appropriate to the Thai villager. Those people defined as individualistic in a western society would tend not to submit themselves to the dogmatic commands of an authority figure especially if the course of action being suggested was clearly not beneficial to the needs of that individual. The Thai response to

such a situation, as noted above, is mute acceptance of the plan and agreement with the superior, based upon respect for his position. Such ready subservience does not appear on the surface to depict individualistic tendencies.

In cases where such behavior occurs, however, the situational subservience of the individual to the authority figure means little in terms of commitment once the villager has left the presence of the formal meeting. Here, away from the exigencies of the formal social interaction setting and the potential for open interpersonal conflict, the villager defines himself as free to decide what he, as an individual, chooses to commit himself to in action. His ritualistic agreement with the superior's plan simply indicates that he respects the position of the superior. Commitment to the plan comes only as the project meets the individual needs of the villager. Such individualistic response to projects, coupled with the formal ritualistic agreement and apparent enthusiasm of the villagers for development projects in the village exasperates many rural development workers who make the mistake of assuming that agreement in the formal setting will be translated into commitment and action in the project implementation stage. Such is often not the case, making development planning in the village setting problematic at best.

The concept of the entourage, on the other hand, appears to

embody an ongoing form of dependence which often constrains the individual and demands subservient action on his part. Within the village setting, the Thai villager realizes that bettering one's position through extraordinary economic or social endeavours is normally dependent "largely upon how much others can be induced to do on one's behalf" (Piker, 1968:780). The dependency involved, however, seems to contradict the individualistic, freedom-loving tendencies outlined above.

This apparent contradiction becomes less confusing when viewed simply as a strategy for the achievement of individual goals. With the assistance of some patron who is more powerful, wealthy, or influential than himself, the villager may be able to satisfy his needs. Without such assistance personal aggrandizement may well be impossible. With this in mind, the individual freely chooses the strategy of dependence in order to increase his chances of personal advancement. The fact that dependence in such cases is a strategy becomes obvious when we note that the villager freely and frequently changes such entourage allegiances when hoped-for benefits are not forthcoming. In Hanks' and Phillips' words:

The Thai system of affiliation with a leader who grants favors in return for obedient service encourages dependence.... In this system the provision for limiting the power of a superior lies in the freedom of changing affiliation (Kaplan, 1961:654-655).

In this way the individual remains very much in charge of the relationship, a fact which clearly reduces the psychological

conflicts potentially present through the apparent dependency involved.

In summary, then, although this value pattern is acted out in ways which reflect the cultural realities within the Thai setting, the value of individualism tends to motivate both the types of social behavior which occur and, to a large extent, the forms of social organization which have evolved in the village. As an overall orientation, this value pattern represents a strong limiting factor with regard to attempts to establish any form of large scale cooperative ventures among the rural population.

SUMMARY

In an article which examines the concept of atomistic society, Honigman provides a list of observable characteristics of behavior which he maintains are typical of social structures representing atomistic tendencies. Among them are the following:

- 1) Primary concern is put on a person's own individual interests and on great freedom from, or avoidance of social constraint. As a result, interpersonal behavior strongly manifests the property of individualism...
- 2) People reveal a tendency to retreat from too intense or unnecessary contact with neighbours, with the result that interpersonal relations are marked by empirically demonstrable reserve or caution ... Interest is most often confined to short term consequences or expected reciprocities; such

relationships do not give rise to long term structural obligations.

- 3) When attempts at large scale organization are made, they often fail because people are unready or unwilling to collaborate or cooperate.
- 4) Alliances shift fluidly and the individual withdraws from groups or autonomously changes his loyalty.

(Honigman, 1968:220-221)

Honigman's four characteristics of atomistic society, interrelated as they are, reflect a great deal of the social structure and cultural tradition described above in relation to Thai society. Indeed, Piker (1968) characterizes the Thai social order as generally atomistic, although he cites some specifics (notably friendship patterns) which fall outside this pattern. The direct implications of this form of social organization and value orientation with regard to the introduction of an innovation such as community development are difficult to predict with accuracy. However, the very forms which village social structure have taken and the behavior expected as a result of cultural value patterns leads to some speculation as to some of the potential limitations of such an effort. It is to an examination of the realities of the community development program as implemented by the Thai government that this study now turns, bearing in mind that the interrelationship between social structure and social values will determine in the final analysis the potential for the successful utilization of this development approach in rural Thailand.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND THE THAI SOCIAL SETTING

In seeking a goal of increasing technological change, the Thai government for almost a century has followed a policy based on the accepted theory that technological change was not only a good thing ... but that such change should be introduced from the outside and should spread through government initiative from the top and center downward and outward to the Thai people. Thus until very recently this policy of forced feeding from the top down has held the field without challenge (Yatsushiro, 1966:121).

We prefer to reserve the term community development for the process described as change from a condition where one or two people or a small elite within or without the local community make decisions for the rest of the people to a condition where people themselves make these decisions about matters of common concern; from a state of minimum to one of maximum cooperation; from a condition where few participate to one where many participate; [and] from where all resources and specialists come from outside to one where local people make the most of their own resources.

...much of what is considered community development abroad would not fall within the present definition, for the activities involved frequently do not aim primarily at strengthening the horizontal pattern of the local community but aim rather at accomplishing some specific objective such as changing methods of agriculture, improving the industrial base, or improving sanitation... (Warren, 1972:324-325).

INTRODUCTION

The quotations above represent two separate approaches to an understanding of the meaning of development. The Thai government approach emphasizes the material or technological aspects of the effort while assuming that those who are undergoing development have no need to participate actively in the process. The second approach seeks to maintain that the most important aspect of the development process is precisely this direct participation of those affected by innovations in the design and implementation of those programs meant to affect their lives. The end-goal of such a process is represented by an increased ability of the participants to make decisions locally and, through working cooperatively in small groups, to assume increased responsibility for the meeting of local community needs with limited input from external agencies. The physical projects through which such "people development" occur are viewed simply as a means to an end, that end being the creation and development of an attitude on the part of the participants which encourages self-reliance and self-help.

The Thai approach to development stems from a number of cultural realities which assume government control and direction of the process of development. It must be remembered that culture represents, among other things, a "set of ready-made definitions of the situation" (Bock, 1969:188), definitions which tend to

structure appropriate modes of action within given contexts. As a rural worker considers the implementation of a development approach within a specific culture, he invariably discovers certain of the culture's "definitions of the situation" which tend to hinder or facilitate the acceptance of those innovations which he is encouraging.

In discussing change, Foster (1973:77-88) analyses these factors, touching first upon the "barriers" or change-inhibiting factors which he maintains are present in all cultures. He classifies these into three types. The first he terms "those which can be conceptualized primarily in cultural terms: the basic values of the group, its conception of right and wrong, the nature of the articulation of the elements of the culture ... and the overriding economic limitations that can be identified." A second set of barriers, he maintains, are found "in the nature of the social structure of the group: the prevailing type of family, and the relationship among its members, ... the locus of authority in familial and political units, the nature of factions, and the like." His third category of change-inhibiting factors he expresses in psychological terms, i.e. "individual and group motivations, communication problems, and the nature of perception." Rubin (1974:7-12), in his "Theory of Developmental Interaction", insists than any exploration of factors affecting the implementation of

rural development programs must avoid the tendency to focus on one individual barrier to the exclusion of others. He cites numerous studies which propose single-factor explanations for development difficulties within the Thai setting, studies which tend to ignore the total field of barriers in their analysis. Rubin insists that, in order to arrive at a complete understanding, the researcher must focus on the overall effects of the interaction between all three types of barriers. It is this interaction which, in the final analysis, determines the degree to which development programs are affected.

The previous chapter has attempted to describe in some detail aspects of the cultural, social, and psychological milieu of the Thai culture which are particularly relevant to this study. This chapter will proceed to an analysis of how these particular features, or "definitions of the situation", interact to affect the implementation of the community development program within a rural Thai context. In order to approach this analysis in a structured manner, the author wishes to re-state briefly the five basic action principles which have been deemed essential if a program is to be viewed as "community development" according to the definition used in this study. These principles, as outlined in Chapter II, are:

- 1) Community development, as a process, should address itself

toward both the economic betterment of the community and the increased social competence of the community members in such processes as need identification, decision-making, and demand aggregation for the community as a whole. It is a dual-focused process with a greater emphasis on increased social competence over the long term than on short-term material development goals.

2) Community development projects should be based upon the expressed needs of the participants affected by the program. These felt needs should reflect the whole spectrum of the community and not simply those of the more wealthy landowners or other elite.

3) Community development should be democratic, representing a program which promotes the right of each individual to participate in and make input to development efforts which affect him.

4) Community development should be based upon local participation, such participation involving both an active voice in program planning/decision-making as well as the provision of local resources and labour by the participants.

5) Community development is a process based upon the principle of self-help, here indicating a focus on self-initiative and self-responsibility on the part of both the individual partici-

pant and the community as a whole. Through the application of this principle, participants learn to assume responsibility for their own community affairs and not to wait for some external stimulus or agent to initiate the process of change for them.

To the extent that programs meet or approach these five basic principles, they can be said to represent community development as defined by this thesis. To the extent that cultural factors block or hinder the application of these principles, thereby causing a change in the focus of the program, they are held not to represent successful community development practice. The remainder of this chapter will explore, through analysis of the interaction between the barriers and facilitating factors present within the Thai setting, the potential for the successful integration of community development at the village level. The author wishes to acknowledge in advance the artificial nature of the analysis which follows. The reader will quickly become aware that it is in their free-flowing interaction that the total effects of these cultural, social, and psychological factors are acted out in the village. The artificial separation of factors into three categories serves simply to make the analysis more structured. Without such separation, the sections to follow would take on a character too unwieldy for a study of this nature.

CULTURAL BARRIERS

Within the three categories of barriers to change suggested by Foster (1973:82), it is possible to separate various cultural factors under each category. Often the separation may appear arbitrary since in some cases, one factor may just as vaildly be seen as having impact in the other areas. The following classifications represent this author's attempt to structure this analysis as factors appear meaningful to him. For example, under cultural barriers, the Buddhist religious framework, the attitude of respect for superiors, and the elite-dominated decision-making process appear to be the more obvious patterns which act as barriers to the community development process.

The Buddhist Religious Framework

The strong Buddhist religious background of the Thai villager has already been noted above. In relation to individual motivation, the Thai Buddhist ethic has some rather direct implications for both the focus and the form of activities considered appropriate within the village cultural milieu. Tanham comments: "The notion of collective responsibility and activity to improve the welfare of others is not in keeping with Buddhist teaching, which lays great emphasis on the individual road to salvation" (Tambiah, 1974:38). The Buddhist tradition stresses the individual responsibility of each person to

work out his own kharmic development. Each villager must take the necessary actions to ensure that, through meritorious activities, he gains improved status in the next incarnation. In his discussion of Thai development activities, Jacobs phrases the essence of this attitude as follows:

Religiously speaking ... each man has his own responsibility to act or not to act in his own advantage and to accept the moral and material consequences of his actions in accordance with the law of righteousness... In sum, there is nothing in Thai religious reasoning that would positively direct personal interests into channels which would commit individuals definitely in open-ended, long-term obligations to others or to abstract social causes "no matter what the consequences" ... In this sense, the religion offers no social ethic or prescription for committed social responsibility (Jacobs, 1971:290-291).

The only "committed social responsibility" accepted by the Thai Buddhist is the responsibility to his own individual karma and its development, most strikingly through the medium of merit-making.

This attitude does not preclude Thai participation in group activities where the results of the group effort accrue directly to the individual (such as group merit-making activities or guid pro quo farming ventures involving cooperation with neighbours). In fact, a great deal of the merit-making activity which occurs in the village involves group activity. The focus, however, remains clearly on merit accruing to the individual, so much so that, within the traditional Thai setting, merit can be said to be the

greatest motivating factor for voluntary social cooperative enterprise.

Tambiah's hierarchy of merit-making activities was outlined in Chapter III. None of these traditional activities, it should be noted, focused on acts which promote the general development of the community. The mechanism of cooperative effort is not listed as a particularly merit-producing structure nor are activities which focus on the development of community infrastructure (roads, wells, and bridges). There would appear, given Thai Buddhist tradition, little or no motivation from a merit-making perspective to participate in such activities. And yet, the bulk of community development programming focuses on community infrastructure construction. Since the majority of such activities have little direct effect on the subsistence activities of the average peasant (since they are precluded from the need identification process) and since they potentially detract from the time available for enjoyable activities, community development participation is viewed by most villagers as a poor fourth in terms of activities which motivate action.

From another point of view, as well, the Buddhist ethic stands as a barrier to villager participation in community development projects. The majority of community development activities focus upon

manipulation of the environment for the subsequent betterment of those affected by that environment. Wells, dams, roads, and other infrastructural improvements represent attempts to improve the present living conditions of the villager. The Buddhist ethic, on the other hand, does not focus on the manipulation of the environment as a means to improving an individual's present state. The focus, rather, is on living a moral life and developing an individually meritorious karma. Through this means, the Buddhist believes that his living conditions will improve regardless of the social and physical environment within which that life is acted out (and which is only tentatively changeable anyway). Jacobs comments:

Although Thai Buddhism is anything but passive to evil, it is not active against it in the sense that it positively sanctions man's conquest of his evil environment, certainly not through the formation of religious [or secularly] motivated social movements for institutional, environmental reform. In the last analysis, the conquest of environmental evil is not crucial to his conquest of himself (Jacobs, 1971:300).

The community development focus on man's ability to influence for the better his living conditions is not objectionable from the Buddhist point of view. It simply represents an inversion of Buddhist priorities.

Activities approached through community development do not represent an easy method of meeting individual needs. They represent concerted efforts by participants, involving hard physical labour, direct participation, and the commitment of time, money, and

effort be all concerned. To participate in such efforts, villagers must be highly motivated. As a method representing a truly innovative and to some extent antithetical approach to personal development when viewed from a Buddhist viewpoint, community development has little that would instill highly motivated popular participation. In fact, as described above, Buddhism acts as a blocking mechanism in terms of motivation, a fact resulting in what Jacobs describes as the "notorious Thai lack of productive social organization and concerted social action" (Jacobs, 1971:300). The Buddhist framework focuses villager attention in another totally different direction in terms of "development" activities, much to the frustration of the village workers.

Attitude of Respect for Superiors

Closely related to the above-outlined religious outlook is the Thai cultural view of man based upon what Kirsch has termed the "moral hierarchy of souls". As touched upon previously, Kirsch maintains that this dogma reinforces a belief in the "intrinsic inequalities and qualitative differences in individual moral worth between villagers" (McAlister, 1973:189). This belief is translated into concrete behavioral assumptions which affect village life. Within the area of decision-making, for example, this concept is translated into perceived superior ability on the part of the village elite in such areas as village planning and business acumen in

general. Villagers perceive themselves as incapable of making such decisions because they are not wealthy, have low status, and do not command the worldly respect of those around them. These outward signs are interpreted as indications of a past and present low moral worth, and individuals of such character are not viewed as capable of making wise decisions regarding development issues. Conversely, villagers expect that those who are wealthy, command respect, and possess the other outward signs of moral superiority should make decisions for the community since they appear to be blessed with an ability to choose more wisely than others. The outward indications of past and present moral worth and success indicate to the villagers that, in all likelihood, future success will attend decisions made by such individuals.

This concept of moral superiority, translated into a respect for and subservience to the decisions of superiors and authority figures, becomes a limiting factor in the participation of the less fortunate in village affairs. Kirsch puts this in relation to the present political order in Thailand when he asks: "Can a democratic political process be established easily when Buddhist beliefs about intrinsic inequalities are institutionalized?" (McAlister, 1973:200) More to the point in relation to the principles of community development outlined above, can villagers be expected to articulate demands, suggestions, and developmental plans to those in superior

positions when, by definition, those who are in such positions are viewed as more capable of defining and planning for the needs and wants of those beneath them? The community development experience in Thailand to date demonstrates that villagers believe that they cannot be expected to undertake such unfamiliar roles.

It should be noted that it is not only the villagers who hold such views. In his discussion concerning government officials' beliefs relative to development, Jacobs notes that

the political class [views itself] a priori as closer to the cosmic center of moral perfectability than are any of the recipients of its favours. It believes it is therefore entitled to decide what actions to take in the best interests of promoting social stability and economic welfare in the society... Members of the political class see themselves as more worthy and more capable of making the vital morally correct decisions concerning the prevention of human misery than those who are miserable. Hence the political authority must act on its own judgement, whether pleasing or not to the recipients. It has both the moral right and the moral obligation to be patrimonial (Jacobs, 1971:249).

The interaction of these attitudes on the part of the villagers, the village elite, and the government officials represents a strong barrier to almost all of those principles which define a true community development approach. Such attitudes preclude direct, democratic participation in the identification of needs as well as the planning process for program development. They also stand directly in the path of the growth of "social competence" so

important to community development philosophy. Such cultural attitudes make the successful introduction of a viable community development approach problematic in rural Thailand.

The Elite-dominated Decision-making Process

A final cultural barrier is related partly to the concept of moral hierarchy as described above but is based more in the formalized patterns of respect which are demanded in interactions with social superiors. As touched upon in the section above dealing with the Thai family system, all Thai are socialized from youth to adhere to a culturally defined set of patterns requiring deference and respect to those who, by virtue of age, wealth, social status, and position are viewed as superior. The whole system of personal interaction is based upon the observance of such socially defined status inequalities. In all social situations, formal deference is expected and demanded in relation to the opinions and plans of authority figures, regardless of the lack of understanding and/or practicality which such plans demonstrate vis-a-vis those who might ultimately be expected to put them into operation and be affected by them. This does not mean that, once outside the formal social situation such opinions or plans will be acted upon by those who, in the face-to-face interaction, had indicated agreement. The culture, however, demands the minimum of proper deferential agreement within the social setting. The unwritten rule is: "Never

contradict a superior or add information which will prove him wrong or force him to lose face."

Although there are benefits which accrue to those who astutely act out such tradition-bound behavior (notably through the patron-client system), the necessity of maintaining the social cosmetic of such deference has its costs. In attempting to undertake the process of community development within such a setting, the need identification mechanism of a public meeting where all villagers are expected to express their opinions and engage in constructive disagreement leading to the establishment of a valid hierarchy of needs in the village becomes culturally impractical. In such a situation, need aggregation usually results in the identification of needs which represent the interests of the elite in the village since this is the group which generally assumes responsibility for voicing priorities. Even though the needs identified through such a process do not generally meet desires of the poorer villagers, cultural tradition demands that they not usurp the elite decision-making prerogative and identify needs more meaningful to their situation. Such a move on their part would be considered an affront to the village elite who, it must be remembered, are patrons to the majority of villagers. True need identification within this setting, then, becomes problematic.

The cultural dynamics outlined above indicate that, for a

variety of reasons, the implementation of community development in rural Thailand, based as it is on non-Thai cultural assumptions, faces some severe limitations. As may be surmised, the cultural traditions outlined above have been influential in the development on the existing village social structure so as to ensure a comfortable fit between cultural tradition and social organization. The following section examines those aspects of social structure and organization which represent potential barriers to the community development approach. The influence of the cultural values analysed above will be obvious in the description of village social organization which follows.

SOCIAL BARRIERS

Foster (1973:106) notes that changes which attempt to introduce new technology are often accepted readily after some initial resistance. Changes which attempt to influence the modes of social relationship, however, are much more difficult to implement. Communities are structured through a variety of forms of social organization which tend to arrange an orderly flow of daily activity, usually to the satisfaction of all participants. Various aspects of Thai village social structure have been outlined above. Some of these form potential barriers to community development programming. In the following section we will consider the potential effects of the patron-client system, conflict avoidance, and the

Thai aversion to the use of small groups. Each of these will be examined in turn as it may affect the community development process.

The Patron-client System

Within the Thai social context there is one mechanism which dominates almost all social interaction and, to this point in time, has figured in almost all development efforts. It is a social factor without which the government, in its present form, could not function. Upon this mechanism all meaningful official-villager interchange is based. This structure is the traditional patron-client or entourage system, the mainstay of Thai social non-familial relationship.

This system represents the acting out of the hierarchy of moral superiority described above as well as a much more mundane aspect of village life - the distribution of power and wealth by those who possess it to those less fortunate who wish to gain access to it for various purposes. Since the number of individuals within the Thai hierarchical ladder who possess true power and access to resources is quite small, the identification and retention of a patron is considered crucial, since this is the major means of achieving extraordinary personal advancement (with the exception of merit-making). The importance of this type of relationship, viewed from the Thai perspective, cannot be over-emphasized

in understanding Thai behavior in general. It represents an overriding mechanism which motivates a great deal of attention and thought among village and urban Thai alike. Unfortunately, this same mechanism represents what might be viewed as the clearest barrier to the implementation of community development in Thailand. This is true from several perspectives, the more important of which will be examined below.

One of the more obvious ways in which this mechanism stands in the way of an innovation such as community development stems from the traditional patrimonial attitudes of government officials as patrons to all those under their official care. Such officials and the elite in the villages consider it their role to "take care of" those who are, by definition or by arrangement, their clients. Such care consists of deciding which projects would be beneficial for them, what forms of development would be appropriate, and how much development is optimal. Jacobs describes the acting out of this relationship as follows:

Thai patrimonial leadership defines its own political role in the society. The political desires [of the elite] are considered to be a priori in the best interests and even vital to the survival of the general society. In other words, productive political action is assumed to be synonymous with elite innovation which arises independently from the felt needs of political subordinates, not to speak of the population at large (Jacobs, 1971:29).

The patron-client relationship generally results, then, in government officials identifying, on their own or on the basis of a

higher official's decision, some needs, real or otherwise, in the village. On the basis of such need identification, officials proceed to "give a project" to the village, either in the form of a finished product (a road, well, dam, or immunization scheme) or in the form of some materials and technical expertise so that the villagers can carry out the government-sponsored innovation.

The results of such an approach are generally represented by a variety of inappropriate infrastructure-building projects in the village designed to promote, at a minimum, the appearance of modernization and rural development. This is especially so in those areas where government officials do not come from a rural background. A more tangible result in the village is a feeling of frustration on the part of the more discerning villagers and an increasing alienation from the government structure. Such "participants", tied as they are within the cultural roles described above in relation to authority and avoidance of conflict and fearful of losing potentially beneficial patron ties, continue to passively support officially sponsored and conceived programs in fulfillment of their roles as dutiful clients rather than taking any initiative on their own to solve village problems. This last approach, they believe, is impractical given the economic and social limiting factors. If they support the government plans, they perceive, they will at least continue to receive the marginal benefits which the official programs provide. The system, then, is internally consistent. Both

sides perceive the proper role of the official as that of benefactor who decides which benefits should be distributed. In the interplay, the direct participation of the villagers in need identification is lost.

Such a relationship contradicts the basic community development principles as outlined above. In Jacob's words

The program's prime problem is that its obvious development goal [maximizing the villager's political decision-making potential] is not fully understood, let alone accepted on the local operational level where the [community development's] non-patrimonial slogans must be translated into substance through the bureaucratic filter (Jacobs, 1971:63).

The community development approach, including such principles as local decision-making, participant identification of needs, improved social competence, and self-help, are antithetical to the whole patron-client process. Such Thai structures require that bureaucratic decision-makers must remain indifferent to popular political participation since such involvement strikes at the very roots of the system. Allowing villager mass participation would also mean, in addition, that bureaucratic patrons would have to start basing their allocation of resources on the realistic demands of their clients rather than on a capricious disbursement of the often limited and frequently inappropriate resources at their disposal through the government bureaucracy. Such a change in process represents a serious threat to the ability of the officials to function effectively within the confines of a sufficiently

benevolent patron-client relationship since, in many cases, due to the limitations of their own resource base, they would not be in a position to be able to meet the legitimate demands of the villagers.

On the other hand, the villagers have come to expect the patron-dominated decision-making scenario. They realize that if they choose to make their own decisions they do so at the risk of cutting off those material rewards which they receive in return for their support. In a study by Rubin (1971:121), eighty nine percent of villagers questioned preferred to have others devise village projects. Even among the elite of the village, only fifty five percent preferred to assume the responsibility of decision-making regarding village development needs. Of the total polled, only two percent preferred to cooperate as a group to identify projects. This pattern represents a strong cultural and social barrier to successful community development practice in the village, both from the standpoint of the officials and the villagers alike.

It should be noted that, as a result of extensive training programs undertaken by the Thai Department of Community Development, a cadre of trained community development workers has been developed. These workers, indoctrinated in the methodology of community development, have been attempting to implement development principles at the village level with varying degrees of success. They represent,

however, a group caught in the middle between the patrimonialism of the officials and the potential client frame of reference of the villagers. In his analysis of the problems with community development in Thailand, Rubin describes the plight of such individuals as follows:

Regardless of how well the community development workers functioned in helping the people to develop competence skills, often they found themselves helpless to bring projects to fruition. They might aid the villagers in choosing their own projects only to have their schemes vetoed by a higher level official. On some of these occasions, the self-help schemes of the community development people were nullified by the paternalistically conceived schemes of provincial-level administrative or development people (Rubin, 1974:91).

Equally frustrating are the experiences of government officials who wish to implement programs which include villager-centered need identification processes. Such attempts are often met with resistance from those in the village setting who expect the paternalism of the traditional bureaucrat. One government officer described his experience along these lines as follows:

One thing I learned was never to ask the advice of the villagers. When I first came to Rawang I tried to be democratic and give the people in the district a chance to tell me their needs. But they thought I was a very weak man and assumed I didn't know anything about my job. When I told them what they needed they respected me more (Neher, 1974:34).

As a result of the attitudes described above, the paternalistic bureaucrat and the villagers who act as his clients tend to reinforce each other in their relationship. The community development practitioner, champion to none and master, not of resources but rather of a process which represents a foreign incursion upon a

smoothly functioning system, faces resistance on both hands as he attempts to introduce the new self-help philosophy.

There is an additional aspect of the patron-client system which has direct impact at the village level. It is that feature of the system which ties officials and village elite as well to the larger social and bureaucratic system through entourage bonds. It must be remembered that patron-client relationships operate at all levels of the Thai social system, including the massive bureaucracy which represents the government. Each of the officials within the bureaucratic system is a client to some higher-up patron to whom he owes deference and loyalty in return for his eventual promotion within the system. Such officials often find themselves torn between what they perceive as village needs and what they receive as projects handed down to them from their bureaucratic supervisors for implementation as development programs. In order to protect their own opportunities for career advancement, such officials must be responsive to the autocratic decisions made by their superiors, a situation which often results in their overlooking the true needs of the village population. Neher describes this process as it relates to rural vocational-development promotion:

Each year the Ministry of the Interior submits a list of suggested vocational-promotion projects to the District Officer. The list of 10-12 projects is not based directly on the needs or demands of a certain

area, but represents the Ministry's judgement of what the needs are. The projects are more binding than those of the villagers since the Ministry requires at least a minimal response (Neher, 1974:36).

The implication here is that, unless projects are based upon such directives, funds will not be placed at the disposal of the District Officer and his chances for promotion within the system will be set back. In the face of such pressure the villager can exert little influence over the program-identification and implementation process except through passivity i.e. choosing not to become involved in supplying labour and /or resources for the projects while meekly accepting whatever benefits happen to accrue through government benevolence. Neher comments:

The personalization of the bureaucratic hierarchy into patron-client groupings is both a strength and a weakness of provincial administration. The continuing attempts by bureaucrats to maximize their standings in the hierarchy result in a wide array of programs. Subordinates mobilize workers and resources to carry through developmental projects requested by their superiors. In return for their support, officials reward their subordinates with promotions (Neher, 1974:9).

The introduction of a myriad of programs, according to Neher, represents the positive aspect of this feature of the bureaucratic patron-client relationship. As a result of this system, however, innovative programs are introduced only in response to a superior's orders. Bureaucrats find themselves reluctant to be innovative on their own since this could be viewed as an affront to their superiors. Such officials are also aware of the possible disastrous

consequences to their career should they dare to question non-relevant plans. As a result, they tend to respond, not to the needs as they perceive them in the village or as villagers tentatively identify them through their elite, but rather to the patrimonialistic dictates of their superiors, since implementation of bureaucratic priorities tends to guarantee frequent promotion. In a discussion with a visiting anthropologist, one District Officer was quite candid about this fact. The researcher reports: "Mr. San's criteria for allocation [of project funds] was clearcut. He favored any project which would, in his mind, increase his chances for a promotion" (Neher, 1974:22). Even community development workers are forced to follow the above pattern if they value opportunities for increased status and promotion within the government service. Jacobs maintains that

as members of a patrimonial bureaucracy, [community development] workers' prebendary rewards and hence their interests and goals are dependent on satisfying the personal whims of patrimonial-bureaucratic supervisors rather than the rural public with whom they interact and nominally serve ... these supervisors are more impressed with the material results of projects than with the means [i.e. community development process or the lack thereof] by which they were achieved (Jacobs, 1971:64).

As a result of such pressures, the initial nine-month training program which all community development field staff undergo is often undermined as workers are forced to satisfy their superiors by "pushing the process" in the village. Often staff will fall back

on such

patrimonial-political strategems as that of the superior bureaucrat guiding the inferior villager or that of the central community development staff member dispensing service or grace to clients ... rather than facilitating the villagers' felt needs (Jacobs, 1971:64).

The end result of such a process is the reinforcement of the patrimonial system to the detriment of the potential "increased social competence" of the villagers.

Within all societies the basic premise of responsiveness of government officials to influence is determined by the structure of the bureaucracy. In situations where local authorities are responsible to the local citizenry for their continuing positions, the officials tend to attempt to maximize the support of their constituents, presumably by meeting as many of their needs as possible. In Thailand, local officials are not dependent upon the people whom they govern for their evaluation and promotion. Rather they are responsible to the central government. This centering of power within the government to reward officials for faithful service to bureaucratic dictates and needs rather than villager-identified priorities represents a potent social barrier to the potential for the successful implementation of community development principles, especially in relation to the villager-official relationship.

The above-outlined factors clearly have some direct relevance to community development practice in Thailand. The patron-

client system, based upon assumptions of a moral right and obligation on the part of the bureaucracy and the elite to define and provide for the needs of those at the lower levels of the social pyramid represents the antithesis of the approach defined by those principles outlined above in relation to community development. Bureaucrats, elite, and villagers alike believe that "without government leadership [and associated material benefits], people will do what they want, become confused, and therefore projects will fail"(Jacobs, 1971:103). This same government "leadership" represents, significantly, the system through which the Thai bureaucratic and economic elite maintain the status quo and thereby their own positions within the hierarchy. Any attempt to attack this mechanism strikes at the very heart of Thai establishment, a fact noted by Jacobs in the following comment:

Thai decision-makers have neither been interested in nor willing to accept political development because that would imply that the assumptions of patrimonialism were also negotiable. And that, as long as the patrimonial decision-makers have anything to say about it, a priori, inadmissible (Jacobs, 1971:68).

Community development, through its goal of increasing the social competence of the villagers so that they can actively participate in their own development, represents just the kind of "political development" which the Thai elite wish to avoid. As long as government activities focus on the creation of a more modern and efficient physical infrastructure within rural villages the elite will continue to support the effort. They view such efforts as tending

to reduce pressure upon themselves to fulfill increasing patrimonial demands for resources which are limited. Patron and bureaucratic resistance is strong, however, when development activities focus upon the creation of new forms of social relationships which strike at the power positions which the elite currently enjoy. In this sense the patron-client system represents a veritable immutable barrier to the implementation of a community development program given the definition of this thesis.

Conflict Avoidance and the Thai Aversion to Small Groups

The second major social barrier to the growth of indigenous community development programs in rural Thailand is tied closely to the cultural pattern of respectful deference paid to those of a higher social status and the concomitant value of avoidance of conflict when in a formal social setting. These cultural values lead to a preferred style of interaction described above and characterized by harmonious social relationships, at least at the surface level, while in the direct presence of individuals between whom animosity exists. Indeed, Klausner maintains that the religious and social values placed upon the avoidance of conflict are "perhaps the most important factor operating at all times in the social setting to preserve the psychological stability of the individual in Thai society" (Klausner, 1972:52).

The centrality and pervasiveness of this cultural value-set has been examined in detail in Chapter III. The net effects of this pattern of behavior acted out in the social setting are the immediate focus at this point. As individuals act out behavior patterns based upon their values, they tend to gravitate toward particular types of formal social structures which facilitate the acting-out of those values and avoid those structures or roles which block those value patterns. This is known sociologically as fit between beliefs and actions within a social context. For example, Phillips (1965) found that many of the villagers who indicated that they did not wish to run for the office of headman did so because they realized that, in assuming the responsibilities of this position, they would be required to involve themselves in numerous situations involving conflict, both as a middleman in helping others resolve disputes and as a protagonist in protecting villagers from the undue intrusion of government influence. Such was the aversion to conflict that these individuals choose not to place themselves in a position where they would surely have to deal with it.

More in relation to community development, Thai villagers, like that category of people classified by Honigmann as atomistic (Honigmann, 1968:220), are wary of the potential conflicts involved in participation with fellow villagers in any on-going cooperative venture. Honigmann (1968:221) describes atomistic villagers as "reluctant to commit themselves to large groups, even when

ecological conditions allow such forms to appear." The necessity, in such group situations, to suspend one's individual interests and suppress personal opinions in deference to cultural norms of politeness and conflict avoidance causes internal psychological distress for the individual, a cost which few Thai choose to bear voluntarily. In Bonfield's words, Thai "are disinclined to put forth the unselfish effort that organizational life demands" (Honigmann, 1968:221).

If we analyse this Thai disinclination to become involved in the small group setting from the perspective of the cultural prescription against conflict in a formal setting, villager avoidance of a group structure begins to make sense. In the formal village group situation representative of development meetings in rural Thailand, the village elders or visiting officials typically identify some need or needs in keeping with the elite's perspective of development or some official plan into which the average villager has had no opportunity to make input. The villager finds himself under considerable pressure not to disagree with the priorities identified, even if they do not meet his personal needs. He is expected, rather, to indicate his agreement with what often appears to him to be inappropriate plans which require him to contribute labour and material support regardless of a lack of direct benefit to himself. The most frequent result of such processes is a high level of frustration on the part of

the villagers, a reinforcement of the feeling that the government bureaucracy is not responsive to villager needs, and an avoidance, where possible, of this kind of small group activity.

In the above sense, community groups in Thailand represent not a forum for community decision-making but rather a formalized mechanism for the legitimation through formal community consent of projects which do not represent the needs or desires of the majority of the villagers. The reader will recognize the close similarity between the above approach and the community-development-as-method approach. In both cases the end-goal is the implementation of projects, not the development of competence among the villagers to solve their own problems through cooperative means. Since public disagreement over proposed group action is considered in bad taste, most villagers prefer to deal with their own needs individually or establish ad hoc relationships based upon short-term consequences and expected reciprocity. In relation to larger, community-based needs, villagers prefer to leave the responsibility for such tasks to the politicals and the elite of the village.

In practice, community development assumes the formation and utilization of small groups of participants willing to commit themselves to working together toward the identification and carrying out of projects to meet common needs. Indeed, the concept of "increased social competence" reflects the assumption that villagers

will learn how to deal with the process of small group conflict in order to ensure efficient and complete need identification as part of the decision-making process. Cultural taboos regarding conflict avoidance in such settings represent strong barriers to the functioning of an efficient small group process at one level and the community development process at another. That this is a fact in Thailand is underlined by the reality that the Thai social system has never featured broad-based group structures which serve to articulate the interests or needs of the population for eventual processing by decision-makers. Given the centrality of the small group concept to community development practice, this cultural pattern represents a strong barrier to the practicality of the community development approach within this setting.

PSYCHOLOGICAL BARRIERS

A number of psychological barriers to the successful introduction of the community development approach in Thailand have already been touched upon above in the analysis of cultural and social barriers. The basic Buddhist view of reality stresses the psychological isolation of each individual as he or she works out a life pattern through the development of karma. Thai are socialized from birth within this view of reality, a view which leads to the formation of a mind-set directing the individual away from social action and cooperative effort as a meaningful mechanism

for personal betterment. The concept of working out one's personal responsibility through social cooperation is held in contradiction to the individual nature of that responsibility.

Two additional psychological patterns which relate to barriers explored above are represented by the principles of respectful deference to social superiors and conflict avoidance. Although in some cases these maxims are observed as formalistic patterns necessitated by the requisites of social etiquette, for many Thai they represent strong psychological determinants of behavior. Such psychological attitudes, reinforced through both the formal and informal learning systems of the community, further increase the strength of those attitudes and values which lead to the continued functioning of the patron-client system. Such psychological legitimation of the role of this structure makes it an even more powerful blocking mechanism to community development practice, since a massive psychological re-orientation of the villagers would be necessary in order to begin any meaningful structural changes in the village. In the words of Chulasiriwongs: "To change [the patron-client system] would require a direct and massive attack on Thai culture and the Thais' personal attitudes toward their lives" (Neher, 1974:V). The amount of effort required to effect such changes at the psychological level is clearly beyond the desire or the intention of the Thai government to undertake, based on their actions to date.

STIMULANTS TO THE ADOPTION OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Foster (1973:76) points out that all societies exist in what might be termed a "state of relative tension". Within any given culture there are those factors which work to maintain the status quo. We have referred to these factors as they relate to the Thai context as "barriers to change". There are also within all cultural settings, however, factors which tend to promote the adoption of novel problem-solving approaches and solutions. Such cultural, social, and psychological conditions tend to encourage innovation in the face of traditional social patterns and norms. At any given time, the readiness of a culture to assume new solutions to problems or innovative strategies of social organization reflects the state of the balance between these two sets of opposing forces.

As well as barriers to the adoption of the innovative strategy of community development within the Thai framework, then, there are factors which potentially encourage the adoption of this approach to rural development. Although this author's research indicates that, at the present point in the process of Thai cultural evolution the state of the balance between barriers and stimulants to the use of community development favors the status quo, it is necessary to examine what potential motivators there are within the culture if we are to have an overall view of the

existing social context. In the section which follows, the author will examine motivators to change under the principal headings of economic gain, competition, obligations of friendship, and use of authority.

Economic Gain

Thai villagers have been shown to have an aversion to cooperative ventures, including those whereby they could conceivably achieve significant economic gain. Yet the motivation of increased income has been successfully utilized in several instances to encourage community cooperation around a variety of projects on an ad hoc basis. This author was personally involved in two such projects coordinated through the National Youth Office of the Thai government. In the first case ten village youth worked cooperatively to cultivate five rai of green beans. In the second a similar number of youth raised garden vegetables for market. In both cases the major motivating factor was the potential of increased income for those involved, although other factors, in this author's opinion, were also operating in both cases to spur the groups on. In both cases the groups included one youth who had participated in a training program which ensured that the leader had the necessary technical knowledge to carry out the project. This technical "expertise" proved essential since in both cases the growing period was at the end of the normal agricultural

cycle, a fact that necessitated additional irrigation for the crops. A second factor which may have increased motivation was that in both cases the projects were carried out on borrowed land, in the first case donated by the local temple, in the second by one of the local farmers in the district. Other equipment required was already readily available in the community and funds were made available free of interest by the National Youth Office such that the total investment in terms of cash outlay for the project was minimal for all concerned. Notwithstanding all of these special features which increased the motivation of these groups, however, the main incentive was clearly the potential for additional revenue which would flow from participation in the efforts.

These projects used above as examples demonstrate that the Thai villager is potentially willing to cooperate with others as long as he knows that the chances of success are quite high (as a result of possession of technical skill on his own, trust in a trained leader, or demonstrated proof that the project is feasible) and he does not have to undertake a substantial risk with the minimal capital at his disposal. This last condition is especially important given the near-subsistence level of most villagers in rural Thailand. Wealthy farmers generally have a percentage of their income which they can use for innovative ventures without courting disaster. This is not the case with the

average villager who in recent years is coming increasingly under the influence of rising costs for necessities and who is being forced to participate in the costly process of increased commercialization of agriculture. In some cases, however, the motivation of economic gain has caused the wealthier farmers to innovate and, after their initial success, the more subsistence-level farmers have followed their lead. Neher describes a coffee-raising project in Northern Thailand as a case in point. The project succeeded, he maintains

in large part because the wealthier farmers were willing to take the risk of investment. Once the venture proved to be profitable, poorer villagers were eager to join. Clearly developmental projects that can be shown to be productive will flourish among the economically rational Thai (Neher, 1974:42).

Although other projects have demonstrated that this is not always the case, economic gain clearly represents a motivating factor to villager participation in development projects and it may even overcome, in some cases, cultural aversion to cooperative effort, given some of the conditions noted above.

Competition

Within the Thai context, Foster's concept of "limited good" (Foster, 1973:35) has until recently remained relatively meaningless. The Buddhist principle of karma justified the vast discrepancies between the wealthy and the poor and motivated all individuals to look forward to the possibility of one day attaining

wealth and high social status. At the same time, those who were presently wealthy were not viewed with hatred or spite simply because of their wealth since such outward signs indicated simply a meritorious karma resulting from past good deeds. In relation to the Buddhist principles, the path to wealth, prestige, and position is through the unlimited possibilities of merit-making rather than through competition for limited goods. Traditional culture has therefore followed a more religiously-oriented method of achieving economic and social advancement rather than the competition found in other cultural settings.

A second factor has also been responsible for a lack of serious inter-villager and inter-village competition in rural Thailand. The patron-client system which disbursed resources and services in return for fulfillment of patrimonial responsibilities has militated against the need for competition among villagers for need satisfaction. Patrons generally met the traditionally meager demands of their clients in a mutually satisfactory manner.

In present times, increasing resource limitations placed upon local officials coupled with accelerated popular demand for support of local development needs within the village has brought about a situation leading to increasing discrepancy between villager demands and the amount of resources available to meet

those demands. At the personal level this has not appreciably added to competition, but at the village level this situation has resulted in considerably increased inter-village competition for scarce funds needed to meet village priorities.

In addition, this development has resulted in villagers adopting some of those very principles which community development personnel have been attempting to implement. In Neher's description of the Keng commune council's operation some of the results of this process become clear. The council, which represented thirteen villages, met to decide which projects within the area would receive portions of the commune budget. Mr. Peng, the headman of one of the villages in the commune, had taken the opportunity to discuss the potential budget with the District Officer before the meeting. His reaction to that initial meeting was as follows:

Mr. Peng called a meeting of the village politicals to explain that the commune had four thousand baht to allocate for road and irrigation projects ... He pointed out that a local road project would be of great benefit to Keng because of its location on that road and warned the members of the commune council [who were from his village] that they must be united because other villages could join together and vote for a project of little use to Keng (Neher, 1974:59).

The limited budget available forced the planned cooperation of villagers, albeit the politicals, in order to successfully compete for resources. In another village the process was extended to the non-politicals as well. In Sung district

village road projects, water wells, new schools, and temple buildings received the support of the District Officer when the villagers made large monetary contributions thereby decreasing the amount he had to allocate (Neher, 1974:27).

In competition with other villages for limited resources, then, villagers were forced to cooperate actively to ensure the patrimonial prebends for which previously they had not had to actively contend. In this sense, competition represents a potential motivating process encouraging Thai villagers to adopt some of the principles of community development, albeit for a reason which stems from traditional patrimonial social behavior patterns.

Obligations of Friendship

Villager-official relations in Thailand have traditionally been cool and distant. Bureaucratic officials have looked down upon the villagers from their positions within a patrimonial hierarchy which is not accountable to village influence or evaluation. Villagers, desirous of patrimonial benefits, feel dependent upon officials to ensure such prebends. They feel in need of external leadership to ensure the success of village efforts while at the same time they remain aware of the potential of being coerced and compelled by that leadership to undertake projects which do not meet their immediate perceived needs. As a result of the above set of dynamics, bonds of friendship are only infrequently found between village-level Thai and

officials, such bonds usually existing between the elite and the District Officer and based upon mutual (i.e. patrimonial) support.

Recently, however, the introduction of low level community development workers in the village has had some impact upon this relationship. Community development workers have limited access to resources or power (and make this clear to the villagers). They typically do not attempt to make untoward demands upon the villagers as long as their supervisors do not excessively pressure them to hurry the completion of material projects. Such workers, in addition, appear willing to discuss the villagers' real needs without imposing some externally defined viewpoint. Rubin (1974:27) asserts that such workers evoke a "relative lack of awe (krengchai)" among the village elite. This author's experience indicates that the same is true among the average villagers. This new relationship can potentially lead to an increased level of trust between the villagers and the community development workers once the villagers are able to recognize that the worker is not in a position to assist them in a patrimonial style.

Such a level of relationship has the potential of developing new roles for both the government workers and the villagers based upon the friendships established. Piker (1968:200-204), in discussing Thai interpersonal relations, identifies friendship as one of the more meaningful forms of relationship outside of family ties.

Within the government bureaucracy this author experienced friendship relations based upon common past experiences (attending school together, serving in the army together, or having worked on projects together) as forming meaningful bonds which were often called upon in order to ensure more favorable consideration when requesting some favor. As friendships and peer relationships develop at the village level, a similar kind of bond may become possible between the villagers and the community development workers. Through such relationships it may be possible for the organizers to encourage cooperative development work within the village. The dual motivation for such efforts would become the ties of friendship between the participants and the village worker as well as the equally important factor of the potential benefits which may accrue through the project.

Foster maintains that in many cultures not infrequently community development workers have found that villagers have cooperated with them ... because they felt they had established a friendship relationship with the outsider which required that they do what the new friend asked (Foster, 1973:40).

This, to some extent, could apply to the Thai situation although friendships within this context tend to be developed slowly through sustained contact and, in the tradition of the loosely structured social system, cannot be guaranteed to be effective in motivating action in all cases. Given the present situation of distant official-villager relations and the novelty of a non-

patrimonial official within the village situation, the actual potential of such a motivator remains to be measured. Only further research will be able to document the actual effects of this mechanism.

Use Of Authority

The extent to which bureaucratic authority is or can be effective in promoting such concepts as self-help, villager participation in need identification, and other principles of community development is clearly debatable. There rests a certain inconsistency between the mechanism of being ordered to undertake a task and the principle of self-reliance. Given the principles of Thai social order, however, the use of authority to bring about such ends would represent an approach in keeping with the experience of the rural population. In this sense, a cultural fit exists between authoritative development practice and the possible introduction of community development principles.

There is a major factor which is motivating the bureaucracy to encourage self-reliance in what would appear to be a direction which works against their own retention of power. Local authorities are coming under increased pressure from the number of requests being placed upon them for development assistance. Supervisors are expecting projects to be completed quickly and in

increasing numbers. Villagers are calling upon local authorities for increased material benefits and leadership. Given their limited access to funds and development assistance in the form of technical and material aid, local officials are becoming increasingly motivated to use their influence to promote such concepts as self-government and self-help, although in most cases they are encouraging "individual [economic] responsibility through self-help, but under paternal [political] guidance" (Jacobs, 1971:103). This strategy removes some of the pressure from their offices to provide large amounts of development assistance while still affording them the ability to control the direction of development.

The current use of authority and government fiat to promote the principles of self-help is most noticeable in the on-going development throughout Thailand of the local-level functional associations discussed in Chapter III. These were established for the purpose of promoting economic development and dealing with specific types of political demands. They function, however, under a model which could potentially lead the participants through local decision-making processes to develop increased social competence, especially in the areas of self-reliance and self-help. The farmers' group in Keng represents a relatively successful attempt at such institution building and, eventually, limited

villager participation. The group, established in 1966 and composed of sixty five members

was organized at the initiation of the central government rather than at the expressed demand of the village leaders. Indeed, local demands played almost no role in the initial planning stages of the group. It was not until early 1968 that the inhabitants themselves, under the leadership of the village elite, contributed leadership, resources, and information (Neher, 1974:63).

This group, organized at the initiative and under the direction of the local officials, developed into a local institution through which at least some villagers were able to articulate needs and, through the filter of the village elite, actively participate in limited decision-making. The group, through this process, was able to considerably raise its collective members' standard of living, giving rise to the opinion that such groups may be potentially beneficial.

Through processes similar to that which occurred with the Keng farmers' group, use of official authority within the Thai social order may be seen to motivate the gradual implementation of those very principles which at the present time stand in a logical antithesis to the patrimonial-bureaucratic system of that same order. The process by which these principles are put into practice will, of course, be limited by the expectations of both the officials and villagers involved. In Foster's words: "The use of authority to achieve directed culture change [in this case the adoption of community development principles] should be a function

of prevailing cultural expectations and administrative practice". Within Thai society this may mean that "sometimes basic decisions must be made by persons in authority, decisions that in other societies might be handled through more democratic channels" (Foster, 1973:173). Such limited implementation of community development principles, however, is in keeping with Thai tradition and may, in the long run, be effective in a developmental sense in change efforts at the village level.

In summary, regardless of the number and strength of the cultural, social, and psychological barriers which exist within rural Thailand to the principles of community development, there also exist a number of potential motivators to change which, if approached from the Thai perspective, can be viewed as stimulators to village participation in community development programs. The potential for the identification of additional motivating factors is limited only by the ability of the village workers to interpret community development principles innovatively in terms of the dominant themes and existing values of Thai society.

THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM IN THAILAND:

A MICROCOSM OF THAI SOCIAL ORDER

In order to demonstrate briefly the effects that the above-outlined barriers and motivators have as they interact within the

reality of the Thai cultural setting, the following section will briefly summarize some of the information available describing the community development program as it has developed and presently functions in Thailand. This information is drawn from two sources: publications of the Thai Community Development Department itself and the works of western researchers who have studied Thai efforts at rural development. Although some of the information is dated (Sukaviriya, 1966), the process of innovation is generally sufficiently slow within most cultures that, in this author's opinion, the data point up trends which are still sufficiently meaningful for this study. My own recent period of research in Thailand (1974-1976) and more recently published materials (Suksamran, 1977; Potter, 1976; Hass, 1978) also reinforce the validity of this information as it reflects the present situation.

Goals of the Community Development Program

The community development program, formally initiated in 1960 under the direction of the Ministry of the Interior, sets forth six overall goals to define its mandate. According to a presentation made by Savitya Yingvorapunt to an international colloquium in 1965, these goals,

in conjunction with the National Economic Development Plan were as follows:

- 1) Acceleration of production and increase in family income from agriculture and village industries.
- 2) Improvement and construction of public facilities with active participation of the people.
- 3) Improvement of health and sanitation.
- 4) Promotion of formal and informal education for adults, youths, and children.
- 5) Promotion of village culture, customs, traditions, welfare, and recreation.
- 6) Fostering of local government.

(Sukaviriya, 1966:2)

These goals are instructive in two areas. First of all, they point clearly at the emphasis of the community development program on the development of the material aspects of village life. Only one out of the six goals speaks of an approach which would attempt to influence the methods through which such material progress was to be encouraged in the village, and then only in a vague reference to "fostering local government". The other five goals have much more clearly defined foci and, given the clarity of their direction, have tended to become the focus of the community development program as a whole. Indeed, a project carried out by the Research and Evaluation Division of the Community Development Department was able to easily identify specific projects directed at the first five of these goals within a geographic area studied. This report states, however, that, although the local government project was considered an important goal based upon community development principles, "the survey outcome doesn't show [the identification or implement-

ation] of solutions appropriate to Goal 6" (Sukaviriya, 1966:80). Stress within the program, then, appears to remain focused upon the development and implementation of material projects and infrastructure creating with little emphasis placed upon increasing villager "social competence" through the process.

In relation to the evolution of villager decision-making abilities, the principles espoused by the Thai government appear to stress the development of self-help groups. Selections of departmental material discussing the national community development program continually emphasized the self-help approach. Statements such as the following were frequent:

Working for rural development, we are aiming at the development of the leadership role in the village so that it can contribute to a better understanding and relationship between the Government and the people. Furthermore, through a democratic process of village development we hope a community with self-reliance can be established and local self-government can be fostered (Sukaviriya, 1966:9).

In practice, however, the emphasis has rested on the implementation of material development projects almost to the exclusion of developing social competence among the villagers. This is especially true in the poorer villages where the government is concerned with the urgency of pacifying villager sympathy for communists insurgents. Suksamran maintains that, in such areas, the government is convinced that

community development is an essential means of such pacification, regardless of the principles of felt need and willing cooperation. Despite the emphasis on a gradual approach involving villager support through identification of felt needs, and by enabling them to help themselves in realizing their goal ... the government instead decides to focus on road building and security, sometimes on the improvement of hygienic practices, but seldom on those activities which would enable villagers to achieve economic security and growth in terms of improved agriculture. The villagers by and large are not asked for their opinion but are told what kind of development assistance they are to receive and then expected to cooperate (Suksamran, 1977:118).

Rubin analysed thirteen projects sponsored or coordinated through the local community development worker in the geographic area where he was carrying out research. His detailed descriptions of the projects indicate that only two of the thirteen projects represent the five principles of community development outlined earlier in this chapter. Even within these two projects details are scarce, such that it is uncertain whether even these two represent other than infrastructural development programs (Rubin, 1974:81-82). In relation to the above information, it would appear that although the bureaucracy of the Community Development Department mouths the rhetoric of self-help and villager-directed efforts, the reality of the situation is such that project results related to the first five government-stated community development goals still remain the priority.

The second piece of information which is notable in the preceeding statement of goals is the preface "in conjunction with the

National Economic Development Plan". This is the national five year plan (presently in its third phase) which has been the driving force for structuring Thailand's recent modern economic growth. According to Yingvorapant, the community development goals are directed by a plan whose emphasis is heavily weighted toward economic development, an emphasis which becomes more obvious as the goals are analysed (Sukaviriya, 1966:3). Local projects are chosen according to priorities not dictated by the villagers but by wider national concerns. Such concerns are, not incidentally, more directly related to elite economic interest than to village development. One of the integral steps outlined by the Department of Community Development in drawing up its five year plan is instructive in this regard. The Department instructs that

In reviewing the problems and recommendations on problem-solving methods [proposed by the Tambol Development Committees] it is requested that the meeting arrange the priority order of the problems to be solved according to the Community Development Department's goals (Sukaviriya, 1966:72).

Such an approach limits the potential for effective need identification within the village system and signals that the government's stated goal of developing local government structures and the associated skills must be viewed with some reservation. Similarly, the Regional Community Development Technical Assistance Centers are instructed to keep "activities in line with the purposes and plans of the National Economic Development Board and the Community Development Plan for that particular region"

(Sukaviriya, 1966:132). As Gordon points out, large scale national development plans, although potentially beneficial to the rural population as a by-product, tend to focus on benefits to the elite urban business population through encouragement of increased rural production and better marketing infrastructures (Gordon, 1969:76). The control of the community development process, then, especially its direction in the area of economic development in the rural areas, tends to fit with the culture and patterns of social organization described in Chapter III above as well as with the continuing interest of the urban elite groups who stand to benefit substantially from such efforts.

Local Village Mechanisms for Community Development Implementation

At the local level the institutions established for mobilization of village and Tambol support and participation in community development activities are the Village Development Committee and the Tambol Development Committee. These committees were established by fiat by the Deputy Prime Minister who decreed unilaterally that "within ninety days after October, 1965, every Tambol in each community development area should have a Tambol Development Council" (Sukaviriya, 1966:132). This necessitated the formation of Village Development Committees since it was from their membership that the Tambol Development Committees were to be formed. (Interestingly, when the military assumed

control of the country in 1971 and again in 1976, these committees were immediately suspended. It appears that as committees can be created by fiat so they can be dissolved).

The village and tambol committee system has had difficulty from its inception. As indicated above, small functional associations related to goal-oriented activity fall outside the cultural and social experience of the Thai villager. Such organizations, where established, have been dominated by the local elite, a fact which is not surprising since they are composed of the "Kamnan or headman of the village, because of their rank, and other persons (such as teachers of primary schools or local leaders in the village) to be elected by eligible voters" (Sukaviriya, 1966:12). Since the village organizers work almost exclusively with these committees, any need aggregation generally reflects the perceptions and desires of the elite of the village. This fact tends to hasten the acceptance within the committees of the pre-determined economic goals of the Community Development Department, since this class of villager is most likely to be in a position to profit from such goals. By the same process, however, it ensures that the project goals have little relevance to the local farmer, thereby making popular support of the committees and community development activities in general problematic.

In relation to this last observation, the two noted

problems experienced by the Village Development Committees in sixteen villages surveyed were 1) an unwillingness of the people to cooperate and a lack of faith in the community development process, and 2) the Village Development Committees not understanding their proper functions and remaining unwilling to cooperate among themselves (Sukaviriya, 1966:20-21). It was little wonder that the people lacked confidence in the community development process given the minimal benefits accruing to them through it. The committees themselves had difficulty functioning as small groups, thereby inspiring little confidence in the villagers. Huvanandhana and Hutacharern summarize the situation in this way:

In adhering to our original practice in the community development program [as it relates to the two committees] we have not been highly successful. As a matter of fact, many of the committee members still lack leadership skills and understanding of their function. In effect they tend to become inactive and disinterested in their role as a village development committee or else become very authoritarian in dealing with the people (Sukaviriya, 1966:222).

Village Support for Local Development Programs

In analysing the development activities which are taking place in the villages, the Thai Department of Community Development is quick to point out that they and other agencies are supplying less than forty percent of the total funding involved in program implementation. They suggest, on the basis of these figures, that

their programs operate on the principles of mutual cooperation and partnership. Tables provided indicate that, for example, in 1965 villagers contributed over eighteen million baht to development activities compared to a government input of seven million baht for the same fiscal period. Such figures are used by the government to indicate high levels of popular support within rural areas for the program (Sukaviriya, 1966:12-13).

In line with the present limitations on government resources, however, David Haas presents another interesting interpretation of these figures. He points to the ongoing need for District Officers and other rural bureaucrats to continue to meet the demands for concrete program results emanating from their superiors despite the scarcity of resources and benefits necessary to ensure such development on the basis of patrimonial support. Haas maintains that, in order to ensure his continued good standing with his superiors, the rural bureaucrat has been forced to assume the role of development fund-raiser in the rural areas. Haas observed that " sixty five percent of the respondents to a survey [of District Officers] indicated that they had asked for resources from merchants and other citizens" (Haas, 1978:285). Through this mechanism and the additional strategy of encouraging the poorer villagers to provide voluntary labour, rural officials were able to implement government projects with minimal financial commitment on the part of the department concerned. In return for

donations and use of equipment, the officials are prepared to return favors to those from whom they have received the most support (and from whom, they perceive, they can continue to expect such support). In the words of one rural official:

Our people are likely to be most helpful to whom-ever they think has the most power, because they hope to receive favors in return ... Now, when I can do these sort of things [for people], the villagers see right away that it is worth their while to work with me (Haas, 1978:286-287).

Such a system tends to benefit those who have the most resources to offer the officials. As Haas succinctly puts it: "Fewer resources can be raised from villagers than from merchants, because most villagers are poor" (Haas, 1978:285). In this way the village elite tends to benefit from this "patron-client system-in-reverse". In turn, as a result of their increased ability to request favors from the local officials in return for financial and material support for their development projects, the village elite are placed in a position whereby they can potentially expedite matters for their supporters in the village. Their power is thereby reinforced and the patron-client model is strengthened.

In some senses this form of the patron-client system has broadened citizen participation in local decision-making by, in Haas' words,

forcing the bureaucracy, which had operated pretty independently, to take account of local citizen desires. On the other hand, this change appears to have been bought at the price of tying the local officials to the support of the interests of local elites, thereby excluding a large part of the rural population from regular political participation (Haas, 1978:289).

As a result of the necessity to draw large sums of money from the village population for development activities, government officials tend to respond to elite needs where possible, to the exclusion of those of the average villager. The figures supplied by the Community Development Department, although impressive on the surface, point to a reinforcement of the patron-client system in favor of the elite rather than, as the government would have us believe, a broad-based popular support for the community development approach at the village level.

In summary, then, the community development program of the Thai government reflects in practice those cultural, social, and psychological traditions which, in this case, stand as barriers to the implementation of community development principles within the Thai setting. Rather than attempt the "massive attack on Thai culture and on the Thais' personal attitudes toward their lives" which Chulasiriwongs maintains would be necessary to prepare the culture for this innovative approach to development (Neher, 1974:V), the Thai government has chosen, rather, to modify community development principles to fit the patrimonial nature of the Thai culture.

Through this method of achieving a comfortable fit, they hope to be able to derive sufficient developmental benefits to satisfy at least minimum needs within the village while protecting those aspects of the culture which support the position of the elite. In relation to the villagers, it is more or less true that the rural non-elite have lacked a tradition of participation in local decision-making activity. However, as Suksamran points out, "nowadays, market prices, educational opportunities, and access to the provincial capitals are starting to offer more compelling grounds for reasoning, motivation, and decision-making for a larger number of Thais" (Suksamran, 1977:112). This expanded awareness, coupled with an understanding of the workings of their own social order, means that rural Thai villagers are becoming more aware of the political process. In fact, Suksamran maintains that "nowadays, the villagers have developed a remarkable sense of political awareness but the opportunity to express it is almost nil" (Suksamran, 1977:119). On the basis of the above examination of the Thai Government Community Development program, it does not appear that community development will represent, in its present form, many new opportunities.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSIONS

The community development program was introduced in the early 1960's by the Thai government in close cooperation with the United States Agency for International Development (U.S. AID) as an instrument of rural modernization (Thaxton, 1971:248). Throughout the last decade there has been a marked trend "away from programs designed to spur development to activities which stress security and counterinsurgency" (Thaxton, 1971:258). Throughout the history of its operation within Thailand, the program has consistently not adhered to those principles to which the central government committed itself at the inception of the program i.e. assistance to villagers to help them improve their standard of living with a maximum reliance on their own initiative and the provision of technical and other services in ways which encourage self-help and mutual-help. As a result, the long-term effects on the people in terms of increased social competence have been minimal. This result is in keeping with the Thai social order and, more to the point as pointed out by Suksamran above, to the maintenance of a "closed system of influence" supporting elite interests. As long as the members of the political stratum

in Thailand remain in control of local and national development efforts, changes will continue to be conservative and oriented to maintaining the status quo.

This is not meant to imply that the community development program of the Thai government is a failure. Many changes have evolved directly as a result of "community development"-initiated action at the village level. This is especially true when one examines the number of projects completed to the benefit of rural infrastructure modernization (roads, bridges, wells, dams, and increased public facilities). In this area the program has been relatively successful, although in those cases where maintenance of these new community facilities has been turned over to the local villagers, by and large upkeep has been poor. This last fact has implications on the long-term impact of such improvements in village living conditions.

Other changes have resulted in response to official intervention and bureaucratic fiat. Tambol councils have been activated, while in some villages community development councils have been created and are pursuing member interests. More importantly perhaps, the new breed of officials - the community development village workers - are beginning to have some impact upon the manner in which villagers view and approach government officers. To this point in time this impact has been minimal with long-term

effects depending on the ability of the community development workers to balance their personal needs for security within a patrimonial bureaucratic structure with their concerns for increasing villager input to the processes of development which affect them.

By and large, however, in the second area of emphasis of community development - the increased social competence of the participants - the Thai experiment must be termed unsuccessful to date. Jacobs points out that

the decision-makers in the Thai patrimonial undeveloped society have time and again adopted the forms of the modern non-patrimonial developed society, but they have used those forms only to modernize and not necessarily to challenge the goals and functions of their patrimonial undeveloped society (Jacobs, 1971:9).

The community development program of the Thai government represents just such a modernizing effort. It was not designed to adequately address, nor was it ever seriously meant to adequately address, in this author's opinion, the development of increased social competence among its village participants. Such a goal poses too great a threat to the very base upon which patrimonial Thai social order rests.

As a modernizing mechanism the program has enjoyed limited success in the rural areas. Since the program has never been able to generate a concerted effort to address itself to the issues of

"development", defined by Jacobs as "the maximization of the potential of the society regardless of any limits currently set by the goals or fundamental structure of the society" (Jacobs, 1971:9), it must, in the balance however, be considered unsuccessful as an approach to community development as defined by this thesis. Given sufficient time and the increasing incentive of growing expectations on the part of the rural villagers matched by pressure originating from communist insurgents, it may yet be possible for the elite to see the benefit of popular participation at all levels of the national development effort. Since successful community development is, by its nature, a long-term process this fits the model and only additional research of a long-term nature will be able to conclude for certain whether community development will ultimately be successful within the Thai context.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The process by which the above situation will be transformed is not clear. It would be presumptuous of this author to pretend to have any clear-cut solutions which would lead to immediate change. Based, however, on the above analysis of present conditions, and in reaction to suggestions which other researchers have made, the author wishes to propose several tentative recommendations for consideration.

Recommendation 1: that the local abbots and monks at the village level not be utilized to promote community development activities which the villagers do not perceive to be useful or meritorious.

Suksamran's recent work (1977) describes the process whereby the Sangha has become involved in several attempts to promote modernization and political nationalism in Thailand. Such efforts have involved community development, social welfare policy, the Phra Dhammatuta (Propagation of Buddhism) Program, and the Phra Dhammajoriks (National Integration) Program. All of these programs have tied the Buddhist monkhood directly into supporting ongoing government programs, a role which steps out of the traditional non-secular position of the Sangha. This is not to suggest that abbots and local monks, the base of the hierarchy of the Sangha, do not and are not expected to become involved in local village affairs. The roles of the monks are traditionally well defined, however, and relate to counseling, arbitration, communication, and guidance. In present times the monk's role has increasingly become that of the religious specialist and, while the abbot exerts influence throughout a wide number of activities, he must always remain within the perceived limits of his role if his involvement is to remain respected (Suksamran, 1977:112).

Recent attempts to develop local villages and to encourage cooperative effort have included mobilization of all levels of

village leadership, including the participation of the monks in programs such as those mentioned above. Government officials, in attempting to use the potential influence of the monks, have been encouraging them to actively contribute labour to community development projects and to bring pressure upon the villagers to participate by indicating that such projects are meritorious in a Buddhist sense.

Participation in such affairs can "undermine the position and influence of the abbots, as well as perhaps the position of religion in Thai rural society" (Suksamran, 1977:119). With the increase in outside sources of information and influence, the abbot's position is already considerably weaker than in past times. Involvement in secular affairs, viewed by many villagers as unbecoming to the role of the Sangha, threatens to further weaken his position, even within the field of religion. Through ceremonial participation and direct links involving religious ceremonies (for example the blessing of bridges, roads, and so forth), the Sangha can provide an aura of sanctity for secular activities rather than becoming a mechanism which might be viewed by the people as manipulated by the government for secular political goals. In the long run, the viability of Buddhism is much more important to rural Thai stability than short-run political expediency.

Recommendation 2: that the schoolmaster and local schools be increasingly utilized in the promotion of community development activity and principles.

Within the village structure there are, as pointed out in Chapter III, three local positions which traditionally have direct ties to the bureaucracy outside the village and which represent potentially progressive thinking patterns. If, as indicated above, it is not wise to use the local abbot within the community development process and the local headman, as indicated in a previous chapter, is rarely in a position to strongly influence his fellow villagers, there remains the village headmaster who could potentially perform a useful leadership role in relation to community development. Phillips and Wilson (1964:33) indicate that, next to the abbot, the schoolmaster is the most frequently sought out individual when villagers want advice on secular matters. They also indicate that most such individuals are progressive in their thinking and receive high respect from the villagers as a result of their knowledge of extra-village affairs. It would appear to this author that such individuals could be utilized with much less difficulty than the local monks to promote cooperative activity in the village, to facilitate need aggregation, and, using the school as an educational center in the evenings, to provide opportunities for meeting some of the needs identified by the villagers. In some areas of Thailand this process has in fact

already been attempted with some degree of success.

In implementing this approach this author suggests one caution. It is essential that the schoolmasters involved be comfortable with and knowledgeable of methods of encouraging village participation rather than locked into the standard patrimonial approach. Training in the principles and methodology of community development may be a prerequisite to using these individuals as the core catalysts in the village for the promotion of the community development approach. Otherwise the end-result could simply represent a reinforcement of the status quo.

Recommendation 3: that the Community Development Department increase the number of village-level workers at the local level and minimize the direct participation of higher-level officials at that level.

Rubin (1974:97) indicates that the direct presence of low-level community development workers who were of local rural origin greatly increased the willingness of villagers to communicate openly about their needs and participate in decision-making activities. His findings are echoed by Yatsushiro (1966) and Neher (1974). On the other hand, the direct participation of higher-level officials tends to increase the formality of the interchange and considerably increases the expectations on the part of the villagers that some

form of patrimonial benefit will be forthcoming (an expectation which is often fulfilled, much to the frustration of the village-level workers). For this reason, it is recommended that higher-level officials be assigned to the coordination of project requests passed on to them by the village workers whose responsibility would remain to work directly with the participants, encouraging villager responsibility for project identification and implementation. As a further means of limiting higher-level official participation and potential interference, it is further recommended that community development projects limit themselves to activities requiring low use of material resources (i.e. small projects). Rubin (1974:98) indicates that in such situations, higher-level officials tend to leave project-implementation responsibilities to the local community development committees and their village workers. As the higher official makes fewer trips to the field the local village worker can spend more time working directly with the villagers on their needs instead of preparing for visits from his superior.

Recommendation 4: that staff evaluation techniques be modified such that review of officials be based upon the results achieved by groups which they have established rather than by the numbers of such groups only.

Evaluation within the Thai bureaucracy has traditionally been

based upon how well and how quickly an official was able to implement instructions received from a higher level of the bureaucracy. Many of such instructions dealt with the creation of new "functional associations" in the village or the training of local leaders. The Deputy Prime Minister's directive regarding the establishment of the Tambol Development Committees within ninety days is an example in point. A second case was experienced directly by this writer while he was working for the National Youth Office in Bangkok. The National Assembly instructed the NYO training division to develop one thousand youth workers in the Northeast Region of the country within three months. This task did not fit any of the division's established priorities or then-present directions. And yet such tasks are dutifully performed with the final evaluation based strictly upon the number of groups formed or leaders trained respectively. In most cases the groups so formed never perform any function. In the case of the NYO trained leaders, there was no effect in the village whatsoever since there was no support budget for the leaders to draw upon to perform their job.

It is recommended, therefore, that evaluation of organizational efforts in the villages be based not strictly on the number of groups established but rather on their effect within the village setting. Such a system would encourage local officials to work more on the important tasks of training and organizing

the groups with whom they work to become more efficient rather than simply to recruit large numbers of members to join non-functional groups. The net effect on the village would thereby be much greater and the officials would be forced to become much more village-oriented in the long run. Such an approach would focus clearly on the development of social competence among the villagers and it would encourage officials to participate more actively in the process leading to that end.

As a final comment, the author would like to suggest the absolute necessity of the Thai government's continued attempt to adapt the theory and principles of community development to the forms and traditions of Thai culture rather than attempting to implement a system taken without modification from a foreign culture base. In discussing the role of missionaries in introducing change into foreign societies, Shaw comments: "Religion is a great force - the only real motive force in the world; but what missionaries don't understand is that you must get at a man through his own religion and not through yours" (Fullbright, 1966:18). Faith in the power of spontaneous local democracy (and to some extent the associated methods of community development) reflects a peculiarly North American/European tradition. The continued efforts of Thai development workers to modify those traditions to fit within their own cultural heritage will determine the potential of the community development model within the Thai context.

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APPENDIX I

DEFINITIONS OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The following represent a sampling of the variety of definitions found in current community development literature. They have been selected to represent a spectrum of approaches which includes the United Nations, American, and British traditions. They are also selected with a view to pointing out the different emphases possible within the community development tradition in terms of process, method, programme, and movement approaches although, upon examination, considerable similarity can be noted in the principles emphasized in all of the approaches.

United Nations' Definition

The term 'community development' has come into international usage to connote the processes by which the efforts of people themselves are united with those of government authorities to improve the economic, social, and cultural conditions of communities, to integrate these communities into the life of the nation, and to enable them to contribute fully to national progress.

This complex of processes is then made up of two essential elements: the participation by the people themselves in efforts to improve their level of living with as much reliance as possible on their own initiative; and the provision of technical and other services in ways which encourage initiative, self-help, and mutual help and make these more effective. It is expressed in programs designed to achieve a wide variety of specific improvements.

(United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 1971:2)

The American Tradition

a) Community development has been defined as organized efforts of people to improve the conditions of community life and the capacity of the people for participation, self-direction, and integrated effort in community affairs. It is basically democratic in its philosophy [being] tied up with such ideas as ultimate control by the people, a substantial degree of freedom by individuals and groups, a considerable amount of government decentralization, and widespread citizen participation.

(Dunham, 1970:171)

b) The community development process is, in essence, a planned and organized effort to assist individuals to acquire the attitudes, skills, and concepts required for their democratic participation in the effective solution of as wide a range of community improvement problems as possible in an order of priority determined by their increased level of competence.

(Mezirow, 1960:137)

c) AID community development staffs are largely concerned with community development as a process [which] seems to achieve its goals through an educational process in which the attitudes, the concepts, and the goals of the village people are changed ... from passive, non-participating membership in the community to citizens capable of democratic participation in community problem-solving.

(Shields, 1967:56-57)

d) A process of social action in which the people of a community organize themselves for planning and action; define their common and individual needs and problems; make group and individual plans to meet their needs and solve their problems; execute these plans with a maximum reliance upon community resources; and supplement these resources where necessary with services and materials from government and non-government agencies outside the community.

(International Cooperation Administration, 1965:1)

The British Tradition

a) A movement designed to promote better living for the whole community with the active participation and, if possible, on the initiative of the community but if this initiative is not forthcoming spontaneously, by the use of techniques for arousing and stimulating it in order to secure its active and enthusiastic response to the movement.

(Brokensha and Hodge, 1969:34)

b) Community development is primarily concerned with the strengthening of community togetherness, its organic coherence, its capacity for spontaneous self-help and regulation, and its willingness to participate actively and intelligently in betterment plans that may transcend the local group in scope. People doing things for themselves at the level of the village group is then the aim. Once this focus is lost the emphasis shifts from getting people working together to getting concrete things done and the movement begins to assume more and more the character of administration from above.

(United Kingdom Colonial Office, 1958:67)

c) Community development is not a method of doing economic development on the cheap and success cannot be measured up by adding up the material projects completed. They are but a means to a social and political end. The chief end of successful community development is not wells, roads, schools, and new crops. It is stable, self-reliant communities with an assured sense of social and political responsibility.

(United Kingdom Colonial Office, 1958:65)

The Thai Tradition

a) The term 'community development' or pattana choom chon in the Thai language has become a term of national usage; it means "a movement designed to create better conditions of economic, social, cultural, and democratic government, by the use of techniques for stimulating and arousing it". The goals of community development are as follows: 1) increasing production and increasing family income by the promotion of agriculture and home industries; 2) self-help public improvement; 3) rural health and sanitation improvement; 4) education, both in and out of school, including adult education, education for women, children, and adolescents; 5) promotion of culture, custom, social welfare, and recreation; 6) local self-government.

(Sukaviriya, 1966:108)

Miscellaneous Definitions

a) Community development in Canada has still to define its area for action, as well as the issues it should tackle. [It] cannot simply be concerned with development-as-increase in resources or productivity as it primarily is in emerging countries. [It must concern itself] also and foremost with two closely linked problem areas: the allocation of assets within our society and the allocation of power.

(Draper, 1971:73-75)

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